



Shriners
Children's™
Erie

Temple Newsletter

An update for our
Temple Affiliates



Dear Temple Affiliates,

As we welcome the new year, we're excited to share uplifting updates and meaningful news from Shriners Children's Erie! Over the past year, our dedicated team has worked tirelessly to provide exceptional care and bring joy to the children and families we serve. Thank you for your continued support. Together, we look forward to another year of making a positive impact and brightening lives.

If you plan to feature any of our content and need adjusted files, please contact **Izzy Spires** at ispires@shrinenet.org or (814) 875-8761.

The Elves Visit Shriners Children's Erie

In December, Daughters of the Nile Athor Temple No. 19 from Buffalo, NY helped kick off the holiday season at Shriners Children's Erie. Their members brought smiles, cheer and thoughtful gifts to patients and families in the waiting room, continuing a cherished tradition that has brightened the holidays at the Erie medical center for more than a decade. Their generosity is a heartwarming reminder that patients and families are supported by a caring community throughout the holiday season.





Shriners Children's Erie Holiday Card Winner

Congratulations to Everly, a talented 9-year-old artist and winner of the Shriners Children's Erie Holiday Card Contest! She created a heartwarming drawing of her family holding hands around a Christmas tree. Everly's creativity and attention to detail made her entry truly special.



Mark your calendars for the annual Shriners Children's Erie Telethon!

Get ready to celebrate and support Shriners Children's Erie at the annual Telethon! Join us on Tuesday, February 17, 2026, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Millcreek Mall. Tune in to the JET24/FOX66 Telethon and join us in supporting life-changing care for our patients. Your participation helps make a difference and we look forward to sharing more details as the event approaches.

Shriners Children's Erie Annual Telethon

Save the Date!

Give a Little Love,
Make a Big Difference!

Tuesday, February 17, 2026
at the Millcreek Mall
5 p.m. - 7 p.m.

JET 24 **FOX 66** **YourErie**

Shriners Children's Erie Patient Ambassador, Winter, Featured In Leaders In Care

Leaders in Care is Shriners Children's official magazine, sharing inspiring stories, updates and achievements from across the organization's network. The publication highlights the extraordinary care provided, advancements in pediatric medicine and the incredible patients, families and staff who make the mission possible. In the Winter 2025 issue, one of Shriners Children's patient ambassadors is featured for her inspiring journey.

Cooking Up Confidence

For Shriners Children's Erie patient Winter, age 9, Christmas has always been about more than the meal itself. It is a cherished time spent in the kitchen with her mom, helping prepare a feast for the entire family. Winter has proudly served as her mother's helper since she was about 5 years old. These moments took on even greater significance after Winter faced a serious health challenge. A blood infection progressed into a complex condition that significantly weakened her muscles and nerves and ultimately required skin grafts. Following her initial hospital stay, Winter's care team recommended occupational and physical therapy to support her recovery and help her regain independence.

At Shriners Children's Erie, occupational therapist Kristen Ciacchini, OTR/L, and physical therapist Rachel Mauro, DPT, partnered with Winter to rebuild her strength, coordination and confidence. While therapy was challenging at first, Winter made steady progress in self-care skills such as dressing and grooming. Her sessions focused on improving range of motion, arm and hand strength and the fine motor skills needed for everyday tasks, including managing buttons, zippers and shoelaces.



Therapy goals were addressed through engaging games, crafts and functional activities, including cooking in the therapy kitchen, which helped make challenging work enjoyable. One area Winter initially found difficult was the sawing motion required to use a knife. Through therapy, she learned that using a larger knife with added downward pressure, as well as an adaptive rocker knife, made food preparation easier and safer. These adaptations helped Winter build confidence in a hobby she loves, allowing her to participate more fully in the kitchen and experience greater independence.

Cooking has continued to play an important role in Winter's therapy journey. This year, she is especially excited to use her skills while helping prepare Christmas dinner. From chopping vegetables to stirring stuffing, Winter will be side by side with her mom, continuing a tradition she has cherished for years.

Here is the link to view the rest of the magazine: <https://pub.shrinershospitalsforchildren.org/archives/>

Patient Ambassador Recently Received His Myoelectric Arm!

Recently, Paul received his myoelectric arm at Shriners Children's Erie. He selected a sleek black design and was thrilled with the final choice. Paul tested the device during occupational therapy with his therapist, Allie Blatt, MS, OTR/L, where they played a round of Connect 4 to put its precision to the test. He later brought it to the cafeteria food kiosk and confidently opened a bottle of Diet Coke, marking a meaningful milestone and a moment that brought a big smile.

With a sharp mind and a strong interest in computers and IT, Paul has quickly adapted to the high-tech device. His determination, curiosity and enthusiasm continue to inspire everyone around him.



Outstanding Ambassador Activity

Since becoming a patient at Shriners Children's Erie, Savannah has grown into a passionate ambassador for scoliosis awareness and a dedicated supporter of the organization's mission.

Her fundraising efforts have been exceptional. What began as a simple lemonade stand continued to gain momentum as she reached her goal at the Crawford County Fair by donating the proceeds from her 4-H pig. She went on to sell apple cider and donuts at a local auction and, most recently, collected pop tabs during 31 Days to Amaze. Through a partnership with Kanect Recycling, her pop-tab initiative was generously matched, resulting in combined monetary donations totaling more than \$7,800.

Savannah's generosity extends well beyond financial contributions. She volunteers with local Shriners International clubs, donates Huggy Bears to bring comfort to children receiving care, and proudly represents Shriners Children's Erie at club and lodge events throughout the region.

Her advocacy has also reached the legislative level. Savannah and her family have participated in multiple television interviews, received a proclamation from Governor Josh Shapiro, and are working with Pennsylvania State Senator Michelle Brooks to lower the recommended age for scoliosis screenings in public schools.

Savannah's commitment, creativity and compassion highlight the extraordinary impact one individual can make. Shriners Children's Erie is proud to recognize her generosity, leadership and dedication to giving back.



Rose Parade Recap

Those watching the Rose Parade on January 1 were treated to a memorable moment as the Shriners Children's float made its way down Colorado Boulevard. Each January, the Rose Parade transforms the streets of Pasadena, CA, into a stunning celebration of color, creativity and heartfelt stories. For Shriners Children's, the parade was more than a tradition. It was an opportunity to highlight what was possible when people came together with a shared purpose of building brighter futures for children.

This year's float, *Building Dreams Together* served as a powerful symbol of teamwork, hope and possibility. As it glided through the parade route, it brought joy and inspiration to spectators and viewers across the country, and reminded them that the greatest impact was made when people worked toward a common goal. With teamwork, there was no limit to what could be built, from simple dreams to futures filled with hope. At Shriners Children's, dreams are not just imagined. They are built together.



Shriners Children's and TGL Partnership

Shriners Children's recently announced a new national partnership with TGL presented by SoFi. Through this collaboration, Shriners Children's was named the Official Children's Hospital of TGL, uniting world-class golfers, passionate fans and a shared commitment to empowering the extraordinary in children.

The partnership helps shine a spotlight on the mission of Shriners Children's and the life-changing care provided to every child who comes through its doors. At Shriners Children's, patients receive hope, healing and the opportunity to dream big, regardless of their family's ability to pay or insurance status.

Through this collaboration with TGL, the Shriners Children's story and impact reaches new audiences, raising awareness of the incredible work happening every day across the health care system. Shriners Children's is grateful for partners who share the vision of building brighter futures for children. Golf fans are encouraged to tune in and follow along.

