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**VARIETY KIDS TELETHON 2009  
SHARE YOUR CARE!**

Buffalo, New York: **BILL RANSOM**, President and General Manager of WKBW-TV, Channel 7 joined Variety Kids Telethon 2009 General Chairman **LAURA LITTLE** in announcing details for "**The Variety Kids Telethon 2009**" on WKBW-TV, Channel 7. The 12 hour telethon will originate LIVE from the Grand Ballroom of the Adam's Mark Hotel in Downtown Buffalo, Sunday February 22nd from 7:00am through 7:00pm Sunday. This is the 47th annual Telethon for Variety -The Children's Charity of Buffalo & Western New York which is the longest locally produced Telethon in the world and the 46th for Channel 7.

All monies raised by the Variety Kids Telethon benefit The Women and Children's Hospital of Buffalo, Robert Warner M.D. Center For Children With Special Needs and many other local charities benefiting children that Variety serves.

**SHARE YOUR CARE**...is the theme of Telethon 2009. With the continued support of the generosity of the people of Western New York, Variety's special children will grow and achieve their hopes and dreams.

Times are tough this year and the Telethon is aware of that. **EVERY** donation is important and is truly appreciated. The needs continue for our kids; we know the people of Western New York will continue to support our special kids by calling 558-7575 with their donations on Sunday February 22nd.

**LAURA LITTLE** is the General Chairperson of Variety Kids Telethon 2009. Laura joined the Variety Club Women in 1996 and then joined Variety - The Children's Charity in 1998. Laura currently serves as a member of the Variety Board of Directors and President of the Variety Club Women. In addition to the office of President, Laura has served as 1st and 2nd Vice President of the Women as well as Treasurer. For 13 years she has chaired the Telethon Credit Card Phone Center. She started out by running its original 10 phones in the basement of the old Radisson Hotel and now supervises an operation that has 40 phones, which continues to grow and has many volunteers.

Laura is employed at National Fuel Gas. In her 32 years with the company Laura has worked in the Computer Room, customer service phone center and now in the customer service walk in center.

Laura has two children; Laretta, who is attending Buffalo State College and majoring in Math Education and Robert who is attending Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, Florida and majoring in Marine Biology. Laura and her family reside in West Seneca, New York.

Outside of Variety, Laura is a member of the Buffalo Federation of Women's Club and a member of the American Legion Post 735 Ladies Auxiliary in West Seneca. In her spare time she enjoys camping trips, attending NASCAR races and is an avid fan of the Buffalo Bills.

Whether it is a bake sale, fashion show, newspaper sale or phone room, Laura has shared her time and talents her entire life and Variety's special children will continue to benefit from what she does as she Shares Her Care during Telethon 2009.

Serving as Honorary Chairman for the telethon is Buffalo's own **TERRY BUCHWALD**. Terry is also a member of the Variety Kids Telethon national cast and has been performing on the Telethon for over 15 years, the last 6 as a member of the national cast. Terry is looking very forward to his role as honorary chairman. You can find out more about Terry later in this release.

Laura and Terry are being assisted by co-chairpersons, **EDWARD DeVANTIER**, a Supervisor at the Dupont Co. in Niagara Falls and **PATRICIA SOMOGYE** a past Telethon Chairman in 1998.

The 2009 Variety Kids Telethon stars include some of the best in the business! The brightest star is the 2009 "Celebrity Child", **MALENA MERCURIO** of East Aurora, New York.

Telethon 2009's theme is Share Your Care and this year the 47th annual Variety Kids Telethon being broadcast on Sunday February 22 is proud to introduce and share 2009 Celebrity Child Malena Mercurio of East Aurora, New York.

Malena had just turned 3 years old when she was diagnosed with Acute Lymphocytic Leukemia (A.L.L) which is a type of blood cancer. Her parents Peter and Suzanne brought her to their Pediatrician on July 11, 2006 because they noticed bruises on her legs and back. At first they thought that it was just normal, childhood bruising but when the tiny bruises on her back did not go away they wanted Malena to see a doctor. Their pediatrician, Dr. Downey, ordered a STAT blood test and discovered that her platelets were very low. Malena was immediately taken to Women & Children's

Hospital and Dr. Brecher, the chief pediatric oncologist, met with Peter and Suzanne in the emergency room and suggested that Malena stay overnight to have a bone marrow aspiration the next morning in order to rule out Leukemia. Dr. Fitzpatrick performed the procedure on July 12. The results came back and Malena's parents were told that she had A.L.L.

They stayed at Women & Children's for just over a week. In the whirlwind of treatment that ensued, the staff at Children's stayed focused on Malena's care and took very good care of her! Julie Higgins - the oncology nurse, Dr. Fitzpatrick - primary oncologist and many other doctors and nurses on Malena's team were all very patient and took the time to answer every question. Peter and Suzanne knew Malena was in good hands.

Peter and Suzanne found out 8 days after diagnosis that Malena was an early responder. Which means Malena was in remission soon after she was diagnosed! Of course they were hoping that was the end of the treatment. Malena was in remission so could they possibly be done? NO!!!! Research has shown that though a child is in remission, without the full 2 1/2 years of treatment for A.L.L., it would return in a couple of months. They were in it for the long haul! The protocol for A.L.L. is approximately 2 1/2 years of chemotherapy. The first eight months of treatment were very intense consisting of chemo infused through Malena's Mediport, shots to her thigh, oral chemo and steroids which she would take weeks at a time. She would receive different chemotherapies daily, weekly and monthly. It was a nightmare!

After Malena's first 28 days of treatment Peter and Suzanne received the news that she was still in remission but that she now had spinal meningitis. Children's Hospital oncology department coordinated with their infectious disease dept. and between Dr. Fitzpatrick and Infectious Disease specialist Dr. Ogra, they developed an around the clock treatment plan that worked for Malena. After 8 weeks of IV antibiotics the spinal meningitis cleared up. They were back on track and just treating the A.L.L. She continued to receive her chemotherapy.

They watched their beautiful, energetic, fun- loving daughter become lethargic, grouchy, swollen and miserable. Eventually she lost her hair. Though Peter and Suzanne hated giving her the drugs they were so thankful that there were these drugs to give her! They were saving her life! After the first 8 months, Malena received chemotherapy orally everyday. She also received it every 4 weeks in her Mediport and every 12 weeks in her spine. At one point she was taking 30 pills per week! This continued for approximately 2 years.

Malena's last day of Chemotherapy was Nov. 9, 2008. They will continue to go to Women and Children's Hospital for monthly checkups until Malena has been cancer free for 5 years.

Malena's diagnosis was the absolute worst thing that ever happened to the Mercurio family but they did discover how truly blessed they are. They had friends, family and strangers from all over supporting them! The family has been involved in Stones

Buddies, Make A Wish and Camp Good Days, all of which receive donations through the annual Variety Kids Telethon!

Malena is 5 years old. She attends Parkdale Elementary and is very excited to FINALLY be in Kindergarten. Malena loves to tell stories (especially - The Three Billy Goats Gruff), play veterinarian, sing, dance and play with her Pretty Little Pony collection. She is enthusiastic about everything she does and is full of life.

Malena's siblings are wonderful and have been great with Malena throughout all her treatments! Her brother Jamison is 10. He is in the 5th grade at Main Street Elementary in East Aurora. He enjoys reading very much and loves football. He is very clever and is always telling jokes that he has created. Her sister Mackenna is 8. She is in 3rd grade at Main Street Elementary. Mackenna loves to swim and is on the East Aurora Swim Team. She is also very creative and loves arts and crafts. Mackenna and Malena share a room and Peter and Suzanne love to listen to them giggle before they fall asleep each night. Another Brother, Tony is 7 and he attends Parkdale and is in 1st grade. Tony is one of a kind! He is full of energy and gives 100% to everything he does from sleeping to playing sports. He is in karate with Jamison and Mackenna and loves it!

The Mercurio Family are honored that Malena was asked to be the Celebrity Child for The 2009 Variety Kids Telethon! Peter and Suzanne summed it up best when they said "We are blessed to be part of such a wonderful and giving organization!" They are thankful that the Western New York community is so giving and willing to "Share Their Care" with Malena and all of Western New York's special children.

Look for **MALENA**, and her parents **PETER and SUZANNE**, as well as her brothers **JAMISON AND ANTHONY** and sister **MACKENNA** to share their story with viewers.

CLINT HOLMES

CLINT HOLMES COMES BACK FOR HIS SECOND STRAIGHT YEAR!..... From England to Farnham, New York to the Las Vegas Strip and stages around the world..the 8 time Las Vegas Entertainer of The Year is coming back for his second straight year to help the kids of Variety! Clint Holmes is more than a singer. Like a painter with a blank canvas, he makes every performance an original. His powerful voice and magnetic stage presence embrace the upbeat side of life. When Clint is on stage, anything can happen, and usually does!

Holmes, best known for his silky vocal stylings, has also honed his many other talents, which include dancing and a warm comedic touch. Perhaps Clint picked up that comedy know-how from the ever-popular Bill Cosby, with whom he shared a stage.

"I learned a lot from Don (Rickles) and Bill who were both very generous with me when I opened for them," said Holmes. "They never held me back or limited my time on stage. I particularly learned a jazz comedian riffing style from the two of them."

Holmes comes by his tremendous talent naturally. His father is an African-American jazz musician and his mother is a classically trained Opera singer from Great Britain. Clint admits it was the best of two musical worlds, "My mom taught me how to sing correctly, and my dad taught me how to enjoy it."

Casual elegance describes Clint's presence on stage. He has a magical way of filling a room with a warm, comfortable sound. Clint's musical selections range from contemporary to classic, with jazz and opera thrown into the mix. In addition, he has an energy and passion for life and performing that are infectious.

Having spent more than 20 years performing, Holmes has served as Joan Rivers' sidekick and announcer on "The Late Show," as the musical feature and event correspondent for "Entertainment Tonight" and as the host of his own Emmy-award-winning talk/variety show. Holmes freely admits, though, that he loves nothing more than performing before a live audience.

Among his various recordings, Clint had a "Top Ten," smash hit, "Playground In My Mind (My Name Is Michael)."

Named Atlantic City's Entertainer of the Year three times, the multi-talented, charismatic Holmes is an American treasure. He starred in "Clint Holmes' Sophisticated Rhythms," a dynamic stage show journey through music of the 1940's through the present. In an overwhelming success, "Sophisticated Rhythms" played to two sold out performances nightly at the Sands Hotel & Casino in Atlantic City.

In July 1992, Clint was honored to be asked to be the featured performer at the Democratic National Convention at Madison Square Garden on the evening of Bill Clinton's presidential nomination.

To prove he's popular in both camps, he also appeared at The White House performing for President and Mrs. Bush and Vice President and Mrs. Quayle at "The National Literacy Honors" which aired on ABC.

Since moving to Las Vegas, Clint has quickly become a favorite in the Las Vegas community as well as a rising star in the entertainment arena. He was selected as "Best

Kept Secret" by Las Vegas Life Magazine, and "Best Singer" (two years in a row), Best All-Around Las Vegas Performer" and "Favorite Male Las Vegas" by the Las Vegas Review-Journal. Additionally, he has been the featured performer and host for the "Best of Las Vegas" Gala for the Las Vegas Review-Journal and host of the "Las Vegas Life Epicurean Awards. Clint was inducted into the Buffalo Musical Hall of Fame and into the Casino Legends Hall of Fame.

He released a DVD of his live performance at the Clint Homes Theater at Harrah's, which debuted nationwide via IN DEMAND on July 7, 2001. In 2006 his PBS special of his Las Vegas Act was aired nationwide. PBS filmed three acts in Las Vegas for airing last year and along with Barry Manilow and Andrea Boccelli, Mr. Holmes, found himself in great company.

In the world of theater Clint is a seasoned performer and writer. Along with Nelson Cole he created the Book, Music

and Lyrics for the musical Comfortable Shoes. Clint starred in the World Premiere of this musical at the legendary Papermill Playhouse. The musical had another successful run at the Royal George Theater in Chicago. Clint recently starred as Simon Zealotes in the YouthTheatre America One-Night-Only benefit production of Jesus Christ Superstar with Ted Neeley, Yvonne Elliman, Barry Dennen, Ben Vereen and Jack Black.

He has just finished writing his latest musical "Just Another Man" with Larry Moss and Bill Fayne. The World Premiere of this exciting new musical starring Mr. Holmes will be presented by the Nevada Conservatory Theater in May and June at the Judy Bailey Theater at UNLV.

Perhaps what has endeared Clint most to people of Las Vegas is his never-ending spirit of graciousness. In a short time, he has become involved with several worthwhile causes in the community such as Candlelighters, ROB Reachout, Shadetree, St. Jude's, and various cultural events. Following a brief battle with Colon Cancer, he is currently serving as a spokesman for the American Cancer Society, encouraging people over age 50 to have annual colonoscopies. He has also taken a special interest in mentoring many young people interested in becoming entertainers by working closely with the Las Vegas Academy of Performing Arts. In December 2005, he launched the Clint Holmes Foundation for the Performing Arts, which benefits children in art and music programs in the Clark County School District.

#### **BRANDON BARASH**

From the #1 ABC Daytime soap opera, General Hospital, BRANDON BARASH comes to the 47th annual Variety Kids Telethon to help the kids of Western New York. Brandon took Western New York by storm last year and returns for his second year.

Barash joined the cast of General Hospital in October 2007, playing the role of Johnny Zacchara, the brooding, rebellious son of a mob boss who has come to Port Charles to wreak havoc with the town's residents.

A graduate of the acclaimed theater program at the University of Southern California, Barash quickly amassed an impressive list of television credits including: Tell Me You Love Me, NCIS, 24, Gilmore Girls and The West Wing.

Born in St. Louis and raised in California, Barash currently resides in Los Angeles. In his spare time, he likes to acquaint himself with nature, jump out of airplanes and take solo expeditions to Alaska. In addition, he enjoys photography, singing, writing, listening to music and playing the piano and harmonica. Always up for a competitive game of baseball, basketball or racquetball, he can always partake in one of his favorite pastimes- eating great food!

Look for Brandon to sing his heart out for the kids, answer your questions about General Hospital during the Telethon on Sunday February 22 and sign autographs during the 4th Annual Concert with The Stars at the Riviera Theatre, on Saturday February 21, and appear at the Galleria Mall Sunday February 22 from 11:30-1:00

#### **TERRY BUCHWALD**

TERRY BUCHWALD returns for his sixth year as a member of the national cast. Not only is Terry performing, but Terry also will serve as this year's 47th annual Variety Kids Telethon Honorary Chairman.

Terry is a well-known tribute artist and recording artist from Western New York, who has earned the distinction of being named one of the top tribute artists in the United States by the LA Times. Audiences across the nation are astonished by his dynamic voice and striking resemblance to Elvis. By all accounts, Terry has the looks, the moves and the voice of the legendary "King."

In October of 1991, Terry unexpectedly found himself on stage with a local band, launching what has rapidly grown to be a professionally greater accomplishment that he could have ever imagined.

More than twenty thousand (20,000) scarves later, he has sold over 40,000 CDs and has "opened up" for national acts such as Lee Greenwood, Diamond Rio, Montgomery Gentry, Rick Springfield, Jim Brickman, Sixpence None the Richer, Johnny Rivers, Grassroots and the Charlie Daniels Band, to name a few. Terry has performed for such celebrity functions as: Post Production Party for Disney's 2005 CBS Elvis Mini-Series; Emmy Award Cast Party for the TV show, Ally McBeal and The Practice in Hollywood, CA; WNY Make a Wish Foundation's "An Evening With the Stars," hosted by Kathy Lee Gifford; NYS Governor Pataki's New Years Eve Ball; Former Buffalo Bills Quarterback, Jim Kelly's NFL/ESPN Retirement Party; New York City and Boston Marathon post-race parties; Alan Thicke Celebrity Classic; Anheuser-Busch Summer Tour; NFL Superbowl Parties; and NHL All-Star Benefits. These performances have taken Terry to many major cities in the United States and Canada, including Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Hollywood, New York City and Toronto. He has also performed in countries as far away as Japan, Puerto Rico and Mexico.

Terry's national television appearances include: the annual Variety Kids Telethon in Buffalo, New York of which he is part of the national cast; Your Big Break, a Dick Clark production; Doc, a PAX TV hit sitcom starring Billy Ray Cyrus; and U's Place, a Fox 29 children's show.

Locally, Terry's concerts and appearances are broadcast frequently on TV stations in upstate New York and Western Pennsylvania. Recently he was the subject of a three part ABC Special on Buffalo's Channel 7 Eyewitness News. He is also a spokesman, guest DJ and entertainer for Buffalo radio stations, 104.1, 97 Rock, Star 102 and Kiss 98.5. Frequently, area listeners hear him on commercials and voice-overs.

The Buffalo Music Awards have awarded Terry Top Solo Artist for 2002 and Top Show Band for 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008.

Terry takes part in volunteer work, charities, fundraisers and awareness events for organizations such as Variety-The Children's Charity of Buffalo & Western New York; Women and Children's Hospital of Buffalo, Make A Wish Foundation, Children's Miracle Network, United Cerebral Palsy, National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Muscular Dystrophy Association, AIDS Rochester and Hospice.

Terry has recorded four CDs which have hit the shelves of 13 Walmart stores, Sam's Club, Borders and Barnes and Noble. He is the first local artist to ever sell CDs in Walmart stores. He has sold 40,000 of his CDs: TCB, Big Hunk 'O Love, Home for Christmas and Good Rockin' then and now. His fans are awaiting the release of his next CD.

Look for Terry to do some of his crowd pleasing Elvis songs and also watch as he performs some pop and soft rock with a little bit of country thrown in. Terry has a heart of gold and will help take care of business for our kids.

#### **KELLY CLINTON**

The Variety Kids Telethon welcomes Las Vegas singer, actress, and comedienne KELLY CLINTON to the national cast for Telethon 2009. Kelly is not a stranger to the Telethon. She accompanied her husband, Clint Holmes to the Telethon last year. Kelly was so moved by the children and what all the volunteers do; she wanted to be a part of the Telethon family for 2009.

Las Vegas entertainer Kelly Clinton may be best described as "a kaleidoscope of talent." No matter which performing direction she turns -- singer, actress, comedienne, impressionist, television personality, MC or events host -- her charismatic rays always shine through.

Clinton is currently headlining at the exclusive Las Vegas Stirling Club at Turnberry Towers where she also serves as entertainment director. Being an "entertainers' entertainer" Clinton draws many of Las Vegas headliners and performers

to her shows. Saturday nights often turn into an old Vegas-style jam session with Clinton sharing her stage with the likes of Bill Medley, Jack Jones, Clint Holmes, The Scintas, Gordie Brown, Mary Wilson and other Strip entertainers.

Those fortunate enough to see Clinton will get to know the Las Vegas veteran performer. Growing up a big fan of Carol Burnett and Lucille Ball, Clinton's show is an eclectic presentation of song, comedy, dance and characters. One of the aforementioned sitcom star's televisions shows come to life.

"My audience will get to know me because I will start from the beginning of my life's adventure into entertainment and share with them what I've been through all these years," says Clinton. "I always identified with Burnett and Lucy's style of sketch comedy and didn't worry about any glamour. I was always going for the humor, mimicking family members and trying for a laugh.

"I also always love to sing and dance. I never, even to this day, could make a decision on what I favored most."

The New Jersey-born performer recently performed her one-woman show at the Suncoast and has appeared in many of the Strip hotels for special events performances. Her celebrity nights at the Bootlegger Bistro and other local hot spots in town have been a big hit for many years.

Clinton's television credits include "Vegas Live" alongside Sheena Easton and Holmes as she the perfect comedy foil for the two entertainers. Her comedic spots were popular and gave even more credence to the fact that she was a winner on ABC's "America's Funniest People." Additional television credits "Entertainment Las Vegas" celebrity interviewer and many appearances on popular national TV shows with Wayne Newton and Engelbert Humperdinck, who Kelly traveled with for many years as a backup singer.

Clinton is also a comedic impressionist whose impersonations were featured in a Harrah's Hotel show for two years. She also starred in dinner shows and Vegas lounges during her more than 20-year professional career.

She has her own production company and is the creator/producer of "Shades of Sinatra," a musical tribute to Frank Sinatra. The show has had successful engagements at many Vegas venues and recently opened for Don Rickles. Kelly Clinton Productions also plans, coordinates and books special events and promotes talent.

Despite all these happenings, Kelly Clinton probably really started to live the best time of her life when she married fellow performer and her "life partner," Clint Holmes. "My life with Clint is so special," says Clinton, "he's a great partner. We both understand the business so it just makes so much sense to be together. Our main conflict is scheduling; neither one wants to miss out on the other's performance, especially when Clint's play opens or I get steady job. "We encourage each other; we cheer for each other and we welcome being each others sounding board. Most important, neither one wants to stop the other from reaching their potential."

#### **DIRECT FROM VEGAS - THE RAT PACK**

From Vegas to Buffalo, Direct from Vegas The Rat Pack® comes back for their fourth straight year to help the kids of Variety. Most critics consider each performer to be the best in the country and you will hear why. Steve Apple (Dean Martin), Gary Corsello (Frank Sinatra), and Nicholas Brooks (Sammy Davis, Jr.) return you to the early '60's to re-create the magic.

Here are what just a few have said about this great trio:

The Rat Pack's back with swagger and stagger. The trio's tribute to Frank, Dean and Sammy is an intoxicating evening of nostalgia of the swinging 60's . . . Rat Pack packrats should make reservations immediately." David C. Nichols, Los Angeles Times

"The Rat Pack is a real gas." For two hours, audiences are treated to the closest thing you're going to get to those Sands

casino concerts that Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, and Sammy Davis, Jr. gave in 1960, during the time they were shooting the original "Ocean's Eleven" film. - Daily Breeze

"Mesmerizing déjà vu! I was so impressed. I intimately knew the original Rat Pack, and these guys got it down. Fabulous! They have such beautiful voices, and the body movements are so authentic. I was so delighted and moved by their performance. I mean it sincerely." Helen Costa, wife of Don Costa, composer/arranger for Frank Sinatra.

Below is a little bit of what critics have said about each of the performers. Look for THE RAT PACK to bring back those magical and memorable memories of years gone by.

Direct from Vegas The Rat Pack® - GARY CORSELLO AS FRANK SINATRA "Corsello's timbre and lyric pointing are precise in their evocation of Ol' Blue Eyes, as are his dialogue readings." Los Angeles Times. "Gary's performance as Frank Sinatra is a winner. He possesses a magic and charisma that lights up the audience. You can see musical greatness in the making." The Las Vegas Review Journal. The Sunday Star-Ledger stated that Gary displays "not only the Sinatra voice, but the body language that went with it." After an extensive cross-country search, Jeff Kutash, veteran Emmy and Golden Globe winner, selected Gary Corsello to portray Frank Sinatra in the long running Atlantic City engagement, "The Main Event." Gary Corsello has performed throughout the world in many theatres and showrooms across the country. His list of performances is extensive. Mr. Corsello portrays the voice of Frank Sinatra in television and radio "Luck Be A Lady" commercials for the Pechanga Casino & Resort

Direct From Vegas The Rat Pack® - NICHOLAS BROOKS AS SAMMY DAVIS JR. "Brooks gives an electrifying show combined with smooth sultry vocals" - Las Vegas Sun. Nicholas Brooks is not a newcomer to the theatrical circuit. His theatrical career started at the age of 12. In college, he toured across the U.S. and Europe touring with jazz legends like Wynton Marsalis, Frank Wess, Benny Golson and many more. He was awarded the prestigious Down Beat Magazine U.S. and Canada Jazz Vocalist of The Year 2002 award. The Chicago Tribune named Nicholas "one of America's young rising stars," and Fox News says Brooks is "soon to be a household name." With his powerful four-octave range, Brooks has established himself as a dynamic entertainer performing Sammy Davis, Jr. in theatres across the U.S. and Las Vegas showrooms. "Nicholas is one of our biggest concert draws" - Stardust-Las Vegas. Of his performance.. "when he got to "Mr. Bojangles", I got chills running up and down my spine" - Arts a la Mode. Aaron Neville said "Nicholas Brooks' performance can be summed up...He's got the voice!"

Direct from Vegas The Rat Pack® - STEVE APPLE AS DEAN MARTIN "The production truly comes alive with the performance of Steve Apple as Dean Martin. He clearly echoes the sound as well as the mannerisms and body language of this superb crooner in his time." The Las Vegas Sun. Steve Apple has been performing as an actor/singer for over 17 years. Mr. Apple performed as Dean in the first headliner Rat Pack Show to hit the Las Vegas strip. It became the 6th top-rated show during his engagement. According to critics, "Apple's impersonation of the King of Cool is flawless as he captures the very essence of Dean's crooning style, vibrato, charisma, and classic good looks. He interacts with the audience with the charm and grace of the master." The Los Angeles Times stated, "producer Apple has Martin down cold.

His vibrato is straiter-laced, but his tone and physicality are exactly right, and the audience interaction and self-deprecating humor hammer the illusion home." Mr. Apple has performed internationally for millions in theaters, performing arts centers, and casinos. He has re-enacted Dean Martin for HBO, the History Channel, E Channel and BBC Television. Esquire Magazine chose Apple for their six-page spread on Dean Martin

## MR.FOOD

From Eyewitness News at Noon & 5pm the "Guru of Ohhh It's Soo Good,"MR. FOOD" (aka Art Ginsburg) makes his annual appearance for the kids. Mr. Food has been appealing to viewers at home to make those important pledges for the children for 18 years and this Telethon is one of only two events nationally that he makes sure that he does each

year. Mr. Food will be anchoring the Corporate Match segments of the Telethon. These segments give viewers the chance to double their dollars as generous WNY companies offer to match up to a certain amount. In addition to his work on the day of the Telethon something's simmering at Salvatore's Italian Gardens in Lancaster as everyone is invited to "Lunch with Mr. Food!" on Saturday February 21st at 11:00am. Your \$35 donation entitles you to lunch featuring recipes from Mr. Food, a Mr. Food cookbook, and lots of prizes. You can win big at the Chinese Auction, and get to meet Mr. Food! Get your reservations before they sell out by calling 854-7577.

Hugely popular and beloved by millions, MR. FOOD is an original. He was the first TV chef to promote practical, "anybody can do it" cooking and food preparation solutions, and, after more than 30 years of sharing his unique brand of quick 'n' easy food tips and recipes with viewers across the country, MR. FOOD continues to find fresh ideas for cooking up fun in the kitchen.

Art Ginsburg developed the MR. FOOD entity that has been a trusted name in media syndication as well as the consumer marketplace for more than a quarter of a century. With beginnings as a butcher with a flair for theatre, Art's "MR. FOOD story" began with his local television debut in 1975. Before long, MR. FOOD burst onto television screens across the Northeast in his self-syndicated, appealing 90-second food vignette. Rave reviews poured in! By 1982, King World took notice of MR. FOOD and brought him on as a client. (King World now syndicates such well-known television shows as "Oprah," "Jeopardy," and "Wheel of Fortune.") Today, the MR. FOOD vignette is syndicated by CBS/King World to affiliates in more than 130 television markets across the country, including our very own WKBW-TV Channel 7, bringing MR. FOOD into the homes of more than 6 million loyal fans daily.

The broad mass appeal of MR. FOOD led to a cookbook contract with William Morrow & Company in 1989. Now, with a track record of more than 40 MR. FOOD cookbooks, the MR. FOOD group has relationships with publishers HarperCollins, Oxmoor House (a division of AOL Time Warner), and the American Diabetes Association (ADA) - with MR. FOOD diabetes cookbooks ranking among the all-time top-selling ADA consumer books...from all categories!

With the television food vignettes and the cookbooks, a true American brand was born. In 1993, MR. FOOD went to QVC, where the increasingly popular brand was responsible for more than 25 million dollars in cookbook sales. As a result of the enormous success and growing credibility of the MR. FOOD brand, the MR. FOOD licensing division was launched in 1995. The MR. FOOD image became synonymously associated with quality product endorsements adhering to the no-nonsense "quick 'n' easy" MR. FOOD philosophy.

The MR. FOOD group now has to its credit a high-profile consumer Web site, [www.mrfood.com](http://www.mrfood.com), offering recipes, information, cookbooks and food-related products adhering to the MR. FOOD no-nonsense food preparation philosophy, in addition to a popular recipe continuity program, produced and distributed by Oxmoor House. The MR. FOOD brand has become well-known to manufacturers and councils desiring to align themselves with a credible, trusted spokesperson who values quality and maintains exceptional standards.

MR. FOOD provides viewers, readers, and fans with the information they need to become heroes in their own kitchens. He knows that busy lifestyles require practical mealtime solutions, and he continues to provide creative ideas and fool-proof, tasty recipes that use only readily available ingredients. Anyone can prepare and enjoy MR. FOOD recipes. That's because MR. FOOD stands for value, great taste, and quick 'n' easy practicality.

MR. FOOD continues to make people's lives easier today, while introducing the food trends of tomorrow. And with his newest venture, Mr. Food no-fuss Meals, open now in the Northtown Plaza in Amherst and Quaker Crossing East in Orchard Park, MR. FOOD offers consumers even more convenient opportunities to bring their families to the dinner table.

ILENE GRAFF

Returning to the Variety Kids Telethon for her fifth straight year, is ILENE GRAFF. Irene has been a favorite of Variety volunteers and viewers alike when she embraced the Telethon and became "Varietized" in the late 80's and early 90's.

Ilene Graff is a Grammy-nominated recording artist best known to audiences as Marsha Owens, the mom on the long running ABC comedy Mr. Belvedere. She made her professional Broadway debut years earlier on the musical stage in Promises Promises, the Neil Simon, Bacharach/David hit, where she understudied the leading lady and sang backups from the orchestra pit. She performed the role of Fran Kubelik in New York a dozen times before starring in the National Tour.

Ilene went on to play Sandy for two years in the Broadway production of Grease, but her biggest Broadway triumph was creating the role of Cleo in the Cy Coleman, Michael Stewart musical comedy hit I Love My Wife, directed by Tony Award winner Gene Saks. She can be heard on the show's Original Cast Album. Other theatre credits include: Charley's Aunt with Charles Grodin, Cabaret as Sally Bowles, Annie Get Your Gun as Annie Oakley, and Over Here directed by Mr. Belvedere himself, Christopher Hewett. Ilene created the role of Donna in the world premiere of composer/arranger/producer husband Ben Lanzarone's musical, You and Me, with book and lyrics by Lloyd J. Schwartz; she won the Artistic Directors' Award of the Valley Theatre League for her performance. She had the thrill of performing the role of Mama Rose in a Los Angeles revival of Gypsy as well as entertaining Jerry Herman himself at a performance of Jerry's Girls. L.A. theatre goers also enjoyed Ilene in 2 productions of Neil Simon's I Ought To Be In Pictures; one with Richard Kline and most recently with Greg Mullavey and Amy Davidson.

In addition to playing the role of Bob Uecker's wife on Mr. Belvedere, Ilene starred in two other series, several pilots, and guest starred on many episodic TV shows, MOWs and mini-series. She currently co-stars in the feature film Loving Annabelle, which is playing to rave reviews and sold-out houses on the festival circuit, as well as the Korean-American smash, My Father, and the upcoming The Things We Carry. Ilene shared the screen with Rodney Dangerfield in the feature film Ladybugs, and is very proud to have co-starred in ABC/Disney's South Pacific, working with Glenn Close and Harry Connick, Jr.

Ilene co-hosts Variety Club Children's Charities Telethons in Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Iowa and Buffalo and has been proud to perform at fund raising events for many worthwhile causes. She has also sung The National Anthem for The Los Angeles Dodgers, The Angels, The Clippers and The Los Angeles Kings. She's performed her act throughout south Florida and on the Royal Caribbean Cruise Line as well as performing in concert for The Actors' Fund in programs saluting Kander and Ebb, Cy Coleman and Jule Styne. Ilene recently headlined at The Canyon Club, one of Los Angeles' largest concert venues, at Sterling's nightclub, also in Los Angeles, and had a sold-out engagement at the Metropolitan Room in Manhattan where she will be singing again on March 1st.

Ilene is also an author, and her new book, co-written with Michele Gendelman and Donna Rosenstein, "What The Other Mothers Know," published by HarperCollins, is available online and in bookstores everywhere ([www.whattheothermothersknow.com](http://www.whattheothermothersknow.com)).

Ilene is a native New Yorker who graduated from Ithaca College with a degree in Drama. She and husband Ben Lanzarone met while working in the Broadway production of Grease, where Ben was Musical Director. Ben serves as Ilene's Musical Director, arranger, co-producer and accompanist. Their Grammy-nominated CD, Baby's Broadway Lullabies is a collection of beautiful theatre songs arranged especially for sleeptime and is available on her website, [www.ilenegraff.com](http://www.ilenegraff.com). Their daughter Nikka Graff Lanzarone, a Musical Theater graduate of the Boston Conservatory, is currently performing in the New York metropolitan area.

Ilene will dazzle and captivate viewers into making the phones ring for Variety's special kids

Music will be provided by "The Variety Kids Telethon Orchestra" under the direction of JOHN HASSELBACK. John and the band have performed at the show for many years.

Back for its fourth year... "A Tribute To The Kids... A Special Concert by the Telethon National Cast" This great concert event will take place at the historic Riviera

Theatre in North Tonawanda on Saturday February 21st. The doors open at 6pm, the Mighty Wurlitzer Organ will start playing at 6:30 and the national cast will take the stage at 7pm. This is the fourth time in the 46 year history of the Telethon that the public can get a chance to see the cast performing in their element. During the telethon viewers only get the chance to see the cast do a song every once in a while. At the Riviera, the cast will perform a show as they would in leading nightclubs and theatres around the world. Tickets are \$20.00 and available at The Riviera Theatre, Budwey's Supermarkets in Buffalo and North Tonawanda and the Variety Kids Telethon office on Delaware Avenue in Buffalo. For more information, call 854-7577

A LIVE REMOTE will take place on Sunday February 22nd from Noon to 2pm in the Galleria Mall on the Lower level in front of Macy's Department Store. Stay tuned to the Telethon for details on who will be appearing so you can "Meet and Greet" the stars! on LIVE TV! Variety volunteers will also be at the mall on Saturday February 21st raising money for this important cause.

Channel 7 Personalities appearing will be news anchors KEITH RADFORD, JOANNA PASCERI, BRIDGET BLYTHE AND PATRICK TANEY with 7 Weather Meteorologists MIKE RANDALL, AARON MENTKOWSKI, and 7 weather anchor JENNIFER STANONIS. Sports Director JEFF RUSSO and Sports Anchor SHAWN STEPNER will pitch viewers for their contributions along with LINDA PELLEGRINO and JON SUMMERS from "AM Buffalo."

Other Channel 7 personalities who will be on hand throughout the 21 hour event include STEVE BARBER, JOHN BORSA, JULIE FINE, GINGER GEOFFREY, LAURA GRAY, KYLA IGOE, SHARON OSORIO and JENNY RIZZO along with NFTA Traffic Reporter DAVE CASH from Eyewitness News This Morning.

The Executive Producer of "The Variety Kids Telethon 2009" for Variety is STEVE PODOSEK and ED SMITH. For WKBW-TV it's JOHN DiSCIULLO, Director of Content, News Operations and Community Affairs. He will be joined by "AM Buffalo Producer LEA DICENSO, Director/ Producer LOU BUCHHEIT, along with Programming Assistant LANORA ZIOBROWSKI.

JOEL BARONE and RICH LEE from Mobile Production produce the special video stories. Longtime veteran crew chief CHARLIE SMITH and Assistant Chief Engineer KEVIN CHUDY, under the supervision of Chief Engineer MIKE ANGER put the show together technically from the engineering and production side working with the NABET crew.

CHARLIE MIKOLAJCZYK, SHAWN DAVENPORT, and CHARLES QUINNIEY from the Graphics Department put the look together. The Promotion and Graphic Departments are under the supervision of Senior Promotion Producer JIM EVANS.

Every employee of WKBW-TV...including Station and General Sales Manager MIKE NURSE, and the entire sales team, along with support from the Eyewitness News Team, plus members of news, production, and administration play a role in supporting Variety's Kids.

JOSEPH BEATO from the Adam's Mark Hotel together with JOSEPH ROMANOWSKI from INDIGO PRODUCTIONS will set the lights and sound for the annual event. SPEIER DISPLAYS under the direction of CHARLIE AND CAREY SPEIER return to put together some of the sets that transforms the Grand Ballroom of the Adam's Mark Hotel Buffalo into a television studio.

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The Variety Kids Telethon will once again offer the opportunity for viewers to call in and make a donation with their VISA, MASTERCARD, or AMERICAN EXPRESS credit card. This guaranteed donation means you could receive premium items from an autographed copy of Former NBC Meet The Press Moderator and Buffalo native Tim Russert's book "Wisdom Of Our Fathers" autographed by his son LUKE, DELTA SONIC, PIZZA HUT, BUFFALO BISONS, ENTERTAINMENT COUPON BOOK, SEASON PASS FOR 4 TO SIX FLAGS AMUSEMENT PARK, TERRY BUCHWALD'S CD "Big Hunk O' Love", ILENE GRAFF'S CD "Baby's Broadway Lullabies" and much more based on the amount of your donation. Credit card donations can also be made over the internet. See the entire list of premiums online by going to [www.varietykidstelethon.com](http://www.varietykidstelethon.com)

The Variety Kids Telethon is also online through an exciting brand new partnership with LocalNET. Reach the Variety Kids Telethon at <http://www.varietykidstelethon.com> and click on the "Donate Online" Graphic.

A great way to catch this years Variety Kids Telethon is right on your computer! Log in to [www.wkbw.com](http://www.wkbw.com) and you can see the Telethon live in the Video Box on the main page. More and more people use their computers each day for work and fun. The Variety Kids Telethon and Channel 7 want to make it as easy as possible for everyone to see this annual labor of love and lend their support. Donations from as far away as Germany have come in via the web. There are many former Western New Yorkers who remember all the great work that the Telethon does and they still want to lend their support.

Other fundraising events include the DELTA SONIC SCENTS FOR THE KIDS campaign January 1 through February 22nd. You can also have a fresh smelling car when you purchase a car freshener from Delta Sonic. \$.50 from each sale goes to the kids!

The Variety Kids Telethon is giving away a 2008 Chevrolet Malibu, thanks to the generous donation from PADDOCK CHEVROLET on Delaware Avenue in Kenmore. Tickets are available at the Walden Galleria Mall on the Lower Level in front of Kaufman's. Tickets will be available through 2pm on Sunday February 22nd. This fund raiser has 2 great prizes! The winner receives the car and the seller of the winning ticket receives a \$2000.00 Walden Galleria Mall gift certificate! Look for the winner announced during the Telethon in the 2pm hour!

The sale of items at all area supermarkets including TOPS, QUALITY, JUBILEE, WEGMANS, BUDWEY'S, PARKVIEW SUPERMARKET AND MARKET PLACE FOOD SHOPS mean dollars! The Food Brokers of WNY are participating once again with donations from various vendors. A full page ad showing their generosity appeared in the Buffalo News on Sunday January 25th.

The Buffalo News will continue its annual tradition of Buffalo News Kids Day on Tuesday April 28, 2009. Look for representatives from The Buffalo News to talk about Kids Day on TV during the Telethon. To date this great sale of special editions of The Buffalo News has raised over \$3,600,000 since 1983.

The Telethon is broadcast from the ADAM'S MARK HOTEL on Church Street in Downtown Buffalo under the supervision of General Manager RUDI RAINER and his staff. For information on hotel operations, call (716) 845-5100. This is the 1st year the Telethon will be broadcast from the Grand Ballroom of the hotel.

The Women's and Children's Hospital of Buffalo is the primary recipient of the funds raised. President CHERYL KLASS, along with ELSIE DAWE, SUSAN SPANITZ, from the Women & Children's Hospital of Buffalo Foundation and JOHN MOSCATO and ERIN KLASS, Public Relations and Marketing for Children's look forward to telling the story about the place where medical miracles are made every day. Look for unique stories throughout the Telethon event, including the state of the art Variety Kids Telethon Pharmacy, a story on Pediatric Obesity, updates on the Variety Neo-Natal Intensive Care Unit, the Robert Warner M.D. Center for Children with Special Needs and Early Childhood Program as well as Variety's charities. It was the late Dr. Robert Warner who began this whole television fundraising effort 47 years ago.

Other Western New York media are important in spreading the word about the Variety Kids Telethon. Radio partners like ...WJYE 96.1 with Joe Chille and Cheryl Hagen, and other Regent Radio personalities...Ramblin Lou and the Family from WXRL...Bill Lacy from Mix 104.1 WHTT, John Zach, Susan Rose, and Randy Bushover from WBEN NewsRadio 930, Mike McQueen from WTSS Star 102.5 FM, Larry Norton from 97 Rock...Shredd & Ragan from 103.3 The Edge, Clay Moden and Dale Mussen from WYRK 106.5 FM, and THE MAGIC MAN from WBLK FM 93.3.

We thank Bob Hill from WJYE, New Jack FM92, WBLK, WYRK, and WECK, Mary Davis with WWWS, WGR and Kiss 98.5, Terry Frank from WJTN in Jamestown; David Rowley from WDOE in Dunkirk; John Raymond from WLVL in Lockport; Fred Haier from WSPQ in Springville for their help and cooperation in airing their public service shows and talking about the Variety Kids Telethon.

WKBW-TV Channel 7 President and General Manager BILL RANSOM is committed to supporting "The Variety Kids Telethon" to benefit The Women and Children's Hospital, the Robert Warner Rehabilitation Programs and other Western New York children charities for many years. Bill and his entire team are ready to say YES to our children's request to "SHARE YOUR CARE" during "The Variety Kids Telethon 2009"

Channel 7, Live...Local...Latebreaking....  
and "SHARING YOUR CARE"!

47th Annual Variety Kids Telethon      Sunday February 22nd, 2009 7am -7pm  
Adam's Mark Hotel Buffalo Grand Ballroom