

The original documents are located in Box 2, folder “12/11/74 - March of Dimes” of the Betty Ford White House Papers, 1973-1977 at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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FACT SHEET
Mrs. Ford's Office



Event Greet 1975 March of Dimes Poster Child
Group The March of Dimes National Foundation
DATE/TIME Wednesday, December 11, 1974 3:00 p.m. (Tour, 2:15)
Contact Mr. George Voss (914) 428-7100 Phone _____
Number of guests: Total 5 Women _____ Men _____ Children 1 (age 8)
Place MapRoom
Principals involved Mrs. Ford
Participation by Principal Greet & Photos (Receiving line)
Remarks required No
Background The request that Mrs. Ford meet the 1975 March of Dimes Poster Child was made by Beverly Sills, their National Chairman of the March of Dimes Mothers March on Birth Defects. The Poster Child, age 8, was born without eyes.

REQUIREMENTS

Social: Guest list _____
Invitations _____ Programs _____ Menus _____
Refreshments Yes (Coffee, tea, cakes) (Coke for the little girl)
Entertainment _____
Decorations/flowers Yes, normal for MapRoom
Music _____
Social Aides _____
Dress _____ Coat check _____
Other Tour officer for 2:15 tour.
Press: Reporters Yes
Photographers Yes
TV Crews Yes
White House Photographers Yes Color _____ Mono. _____
Other _____
Technical Support: Microphones _____ PA Other Rooms _____
Recording _____
Lights _____
Transportation By cab
Parking _____
Housing _____
Other _____ (Risers, stage, platforms) _____

Project Co-ordinator Susan Porter Phone x2850

Site diagrams should be attached if technical support is heavy.

Note: The little girl does not have eyes.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON



Dear Mrs. Ford,

We wanted to make the format a little bit different, and because this group is so small (3) and because the little girl does not see, we thought it would be nice if you first met them outside the MapRoom in the hall and then you and Mrs. Weaver could lead Jamie in, and you then could introduce them to the press. Sheila wanted to give this a try, and I thought it sounded fine to try. I will introduce you to the Weavers and Mr. Nee in the hall before you go in.

Let me know if you have other suggestions you'd like to make.

*Thank you,
Susan*

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON



MRS. FORD

EVENT: Greet 1975 March of Dimes Poster Child

DATE: Wednesday, December 11, 1974

TIME: 3:00 p.m.

PLACE: Map Room

GUESTS: -Miss Jamie Weaver, age 9
1975 March of Dimes Poster Child
-Mrs. Brenda Weaver
Jamie's mother; Spokane, Washington
-Mr. Joseph Nee
President, The National Foundation, March of Dimes
-Mr. Everett Thorner
Staff person who travels with poster child

SEQUENCE:

3:00 p.m. When the press are in the Map Room and all is ready, Susan Porter will give you a call.

Your guests will be in the hall outside the Map Room where Susan will introduce you to them. Then you and Jamie's mother can take Jamie (who does not see) by the hand and proceed into the Map Room to introduce Jamie, her mother, and Mr. Nee to the press.

At the conclusion of the photographs, at your invitation to your guests to have a cup of coffee, the press will leave giving you an opportunity for a brief visit.

At the conclusion, return to family quarters.

NOTE:

- Open press coverage and White House photographer.
- "Betty Ford" pens will be available; photos will be sent afterwards.
- Your guests will have had a special tour of the White House before meeting with you because of the Diplomatic Children's Party.
- Your next appointment is at 4:30, the Diplomatic Children's Party.

BACKGROUND ON POSTER CHILD:

Jamie Weaver, age 9, from Spokane, Washington, is a peppy, freckled, redhead who was born without eyes, a rare birth defect known as congenital anophthalmos. She wears artificial plastic eyes and will have cosmetic surgery on her eye sockets when she is twelve.

Her blindness, however, does not restrict her. She takes skiing and swimming and piano and horsebackriding lessons; she sings in the church choir and writes poetry on her Braille typewriter. She likes school and is a good student in the 3rd grade in public school where she attends both regular and special classes. She does all of her school work on the Braille typewriter. Music and art are her favorite subjects, and she would like to be a teacher.

The March of Dimes press release about Jamie says:
"A bright child, Jamie is always asking questions. Her vocabulary is sprinkled with words such as 'contrary, tendency, and caravan.' She even can explain the workings of a generator and has the function of a windmill down pat."

For the past two years Jamie has been the Spokane County March of Dimes Poster Child, and Jamie's mother has been a Mothers March volunteer for the March of Dimes for four years.

Jamie comes from a very close and loving family. Her mother, 27, is a beautician, working part time; she is also an astrology buff. Her father, 29, has been a brakeman on the Burlington Northern Railroad for the past nine years and is a member of the United Transportation Union. Jamie's brother Chad is 7.

BACKGROUND ON THE NATIONAL FOUNDATION MARCH OF DIMES:

With the conquest of polio, the March of Dimes shifted its focus to the fight against the United States' No. 1 child health problem: birth defects. More than 200,000 American babies are born with some type of defect, mental or physical, each year. This is one in 14, or about 600 babies a day--about 7% of all live births. Of those born alive, more than 60,000 die each year as a direct result of birth defects. There are over 15 million Americans alive today who are affected by birth defects. Millions more are affected indirectly as family members and fellow citizens.

The long-range goal is to prevent birth defects, premature birth, and low birthweight. The critical time is from conception to birth; this is when birth defects happen or do not happen.

The National Foundation's research program has three main branches: basic research, clinical research, and "starter" grants for young scientists. All have as a common goal the purpose of evolving effective treatment and the prevention of birth defects.

In addition to extensive research (the March of Dimes fight against polio and the development of the Salk Vaccine at the Salk Institute are testimony to the intent and success of its earlier focus on the conquest of polio) the National Foundation March of Dimes has been a leader in the prevention and treatment of birth defects. To attain its goal of preventing, curing, or limiting the damage caused by birth defects, the Foundation is constantly exploring new and more effective ways of informing the public about the impact of birth defects and how to benefit from new discoveries about the No. 1 child health problem in our nation today.

Beverly Sills is National Chairman of the March of Dimes Mothers March on Birth Defects.

susan porter
December 10, 1974



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