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## Making Memories E-News

May 2011

*Big Animals for Little Kids mission is to bring joy into the lives of children facing health, emotional or socio-economic challenges. We regularly visit children in hospitals, homeless shelters and foster care facilities.*

A majority of our events support kids at Rady Children's Hospital, Ronald McDonald House, Kaiser Hospital as well as organizations such as: The Make a Wish Foundation, the San Diego Center for Children, Christie's Place and ChildHelp.

May 2011

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### In This Issue

AWARE Teen Program  
Comedy Hypnosis Show  
Volunteer Spotlight



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## AWARE Teen Program Empowers

*"...it just felt right to hug her"...*

Big Animals and the AWARE teen program were recently at an event at San Diego State University called Jenny's Walk. The event is a fundraiser for the Friendship Circle Organization which pairs teenagers with special needs children.

Anthony, a teen participating in the AWARE partnership with Big Animals was attending his first event with Big Animals as a Purple Funkey Monkey and had an incredible moment with his "mentee". He paraded around in



costume at the event like he'd been a Big Animal for years. There was a young special needs child that followed Anthony around. He would stop, give her a hug, and then move on to the other children.

When Anthony was changing out of costume, a Big Animal Volunteer told him that he had done a great job giving attention to the little girl earlier at the event. He told the Big Animal Volunteer "**you know, it just felt right to hug her**".

The AWARE program teaches teens, like Anthony, how to get involved in community service and give back.

Many teens are able to identify their feelings and

giving magical moments to children in San Diego with serious, chronic, and life threatening illnesses, consider making a gift today.



## Upcoming Events

**5/7/11**

10:00am-1:00pm

Carnival for Military Children with Military Families Recreation Dept.

**5/14/11**

9:30-11:00am

Relay for Life

**5/14/11**

Noon-3:00pm

5k Pineapple Classic with Leukemia & Lymphoma Society

**5/21/11**

9:00am-3:00pm

Celebration of Champions with Rady Children's Hospital

**6/4/11**

Time to be determined  
Military Families at  
Camp Pendleton

**6/25/11**

Comedienne Hypnotist with Big Animals

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recognize others feelings for the first time during the program. The partnership between AWARE and Big Animals give teens the opportunity to have these life experiences of learning how to give to others, give of oneself and how together these experiences can make a life changing difference in a couple of people's lives.

To learn more about the AWARE program and how you can help change teen's lives through empowerment, [contact Big Animals.](#)

## Comedy Hypnosis Show...

*where the audience members are the stars!*

Join us for a fun evening of comedy and hypnosis with Marsha Starr.

**SATURDAY JUNE 25, 2011**

Neurosciences Institute Auditorium

7:00pm- Doors Open-

Strolling Magicians

8:00-9:30pm- Showtime!

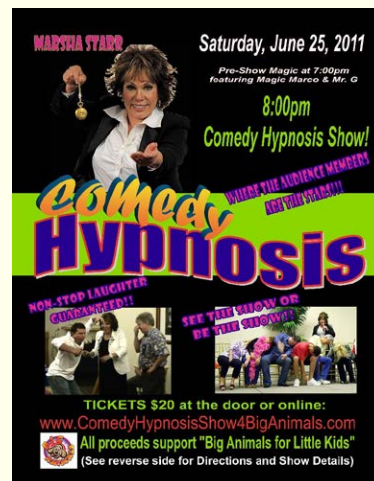
**Ticket Price:** \$20 Online

\$25 At the Door

Tickets can be [purchased online.](#)

All proceeds benefit the programs of Big Animals for Little Kids.

For more information or to purchase tickets [visit the event website.](#)



## Volunteer Spotlight: Jody Decker

*A Tireless and Inspiring Leader*

Jody started volunteering with the Big Animals for Little Kids in 2004 and immediately her passion for helping children and her boundless energy became apparent.

She was elected as Vice President for 2 years, and then President of Big Animals the last 4 years, a post she has





filled admirably for the last 4 years.

As President, she has dramatically increased the number and diversity of Big Animal events and her fingerprints are everywhere, from operations to marketing. Jody can be seen conferring with her contacts at local charities, repairing costumes, teaching teenagers how to be effective in costume and handling all the myriad details of putting on 50 events a year. Big Animals for Little Kids and the children and teens of San Diego are lucky to have her.



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