

Union family raises funds to pay for cutting edge treatment for son with cerebral palsy

A special Bingo Night will be held in Portland Friday, Dec. 13, to help a union family raise money needed to pay for cutting edge stem cell injection therapy for their young son with cerebral palsy.

Oscar Triplett was born to Sylvia and Gabriel Triplett on Oct. 11, 2012. A difficult 16 hours of labor caused a lack of oxygen to Oscar's brain. As a result, he suffered global brain damage and has been diagnosed with cerebral palsy.

The family spent the first month of his life in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) at Emanuel Hospital in Portland.

The Triplett's come from a strong union family. Gabe is a member of Carpenters Local 156. Silvia is a member of the Industrial Workers of the World. Gabe's father, Steve Triplett, is a mem-

ber of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555, and his step-father, Kenny Brown, is with Operating Engineers Local 701.

Oscar has come a long way from his days in the NICU. He has been at home for over a year. He can breathe on his own, eat on his own, and is currently being weaned off his seizure medication.

But Oscar still has a long road ahead of him.

Luckily, neuroscientists are beginning to understand more about neuroplasticity and the possibility for cell growth in the brain. A cutting edge treatment for kids like Oscar provides hope. It is called umbilical cord stem cell infusion. It is done all over the world, but is still in the FDA trial period in the United States. For that reason, the treatment isn't covered by the family's health insurance plan.

And the treatment isn't cheap.

The Triplett's need to raise \$20,000 in order to take Oscar to Panama to receive the stem cells, then to California to do a week of post treatment intensive therapy. They've raised over \$10,000 through family, friends, co-workers and a donation of almost \$3,500 from the delegates of the Pacific Northwest Regional Council of Carpenters. But they still have a ways to go.

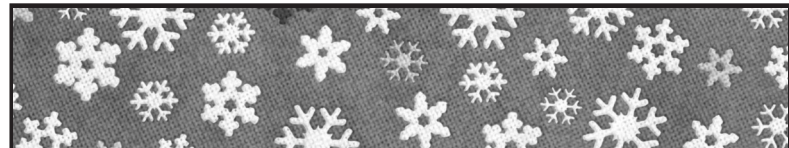
On Dec. 13, from 7 to 10 p.m., the Triplett family and St. Charles Parish will hold a special Bingo Night to raise funds for the treatment. There will be food, beer, popcorn, cotton candy, soda and "Oscar T-shirts" for sale. There also will be a wine pull and a kids' corner. Bingo cards will be \$1, and every game will be a 50/50 split between Oscar and the winner.

St. Charles Parish is located at 5310 NE 42nd Ave., Portland.

More can be learned about Oscar's story, stem cell therapy, and other ways to donate online at www.oscarrising.wordpress.com.



The Triplett family — Silvia, Gabe and Oscar.



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Holiday toy drive ends Dec. 10

Labor's Community Service Agency and the Northwest Oregon Labor Council are accepting donations for the 16th annual "Presents from Partners" holiday toy drive. New, unwrapped toys for children of all ages can be dropped off at the following sites in the Portland Metro area through Tuesday, Dec. 10: Labor's Community Service Agency and IBEW United Federal Credit Union offices, both located at 9955 SE Washington in Portland; The Northwest Oregon Labor Council office, 3645 SE 32nd Avenue, Portland; Jobs With Justice office, 1500 NE Irving, Portland; and local Sunrise and Green Apple Dental locations in Oregon and South-west Washington.

The credit union also hosts a room where children can pick out gifts for their parents. Gifts for that room also are needed.

Toys will be distributed at a holiday party for working families affected by unemployment and financial hardship. Remaining toys are donated to Compassion in Action Toy & Joy for military families in need.

The toy distribution party is a collaborative effort of local unions and community partners. This year's event is also sponsored by BULL Session Charities.

"The Presents from Partners program is just one of the many ways labor supports working families," said Vickie Burns, executive director of Labor's

Community Service Agency, Inc. "We are excited and honored to join hands with our event sponsors to share joy with families in our community who would otherwise do without this holiday season."

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