

Golf pro, wife get into swing for infant program fundraiser

By Virginia Sullivan

Special Contributor to The Dallas Morning News

As a golf pro, Kevin Boscamp of Plano tees off nearly every day of his life.

On June 23, he will be playing to improve the lives of hundreds of area residents. His goal is to help ensure the success of the South Collin County Infant Program's annual benefit golf tournament. Mr. Boscamp knows firsthand what the organization's services can mean to a family.

His son, Magnus "Bradford" Boscamp, was born Aug. 4, 1995, at just 24 weeks' gestation, weighing 1 pound, 4 ounces.

"He was given a 25 percent chance of survival," recalls his father. Today, Bradford lives a relatively normal life and appears to be a very bright and outgoing toddler.

Mr. Boscamp says that much of the credit for Bradford's ongoing progress is due to SCCIP. As a United Way-affiliated agency, the program offers therapeutic services to about 185 infants and toddlers experiencing developmental delays, as well as support services for their families.

"Bradford was born with just bronchial stems. There were no lung sacks," Mr. Boscamp said. Doctors put the tiny infant on full oxygen and ventilation for the first seven days of his life and warned the Boscamps to expect severe lung damage. "Now his lungs are in great shape. That alone is incredible. We also knew that he would have developmental delays, but he's come so far in so many ways. It is truly a miracle."

SCCIP clients range from premature infants, such as Bradford, to children with minor speech delays to those affected by conditions such as Down syndrome. Any child from birth to age 3 living in the Plano school

district is eligible. The agency will ask permission to bill a family's insurance company, but clients are not responsible for payment.

Eldorado Country Club in McKinney will host this year's SCCIP fundraiser. Lanny Wadkins, the 1995 U.S. Ryder Cup team captain, will serve as the keynote speaker for the evening, which includes an auction and dinner.

Mr. Boscamp will join Mr. Wadkins at one of the holes, where they will offer a "beat the pro" competition to participants. Bradford's mother, Shea Boscamp, will be one of two SCCIP client family speakers at the dinner. The Boscamps say they are glad for the opportunity to help.

"We just can't say enough about how SCCIP has been there for us," Mr. Boscamp said. "SCCIP was here by the third day after we brought Bradford home from the hospital. He had laid on his back for so long in ICU that he looked like a little frog spread out on the table."

Mrs. Boscamp added, "They taught us how to move his limbs to help increase his flexibility."

Melissa Tierce, an early-intervention specialist with SCCIP, works with Bradford's cognitive and motor skills as well as language development. She challenges him with imitation games, using sounds and his tongue to stimulate his language development. She also uses toys such as shape sorters to stimulate his cognitive skills.

"Bradford is still overall delayed, but he had made drastic improvements in every area," Ms. Tierce says. "He is a very determined child and his family is very supportive. That makes all the difference."

SCCIP Pediatric Occupational Therapist Rhonda Gayle also works with Bradford on his motor skills, but her main focus is to help him become an

oral eater.

"The ventilator tube had caused him to be orally defensive," Mrs. Boscamp explains. She says that like many premature babies that are orally traumatized by medical intervention, Bradford refused to eat or even open his mouth willingly. He also had a condition known as reflux where the stomach's acids would wash back up into his underdeveloped esophagus. Bradford's doctors worried that the acids might do further damage to his lungs, so they performed a surgery that wraps the stomach around the esophagus.

"Now he has a tube that goes directly into his stomach. There is a 'button' on the outside of his stomach that resembles the little tube that blows up a beach raft," Mrs. Boscamp explains. She says that they feed Bradford by attaching a feeding hose to his button and using a large syringe to push the food through.

The toddler has outgrown the reflux and the Boscamps are trying to introduce him to solid foods. "We know that mechanically Bradford can eat now. We just have to overcome the gag reflex," Ms. Boscamp said. "That's where Rhonda comes in. She stimulates his eating response by offering him a variety of foods and textures."

"I use things like a gum brush, lollipops and even a small vibrator to stimulate his mouth and tongue," explains Ms. Gayle. She says her primary job is to help Bradford get past the oral trauma caused by his earliest experiences. "On a really good day, we might get him to eat a quarter jar of baby food. He's definitely making progress."

Ms. Tierce adds that much of Bradford's improvement is due to the support he receives from his family. "Shea and Kevin were very uncertain being new parents, but I couldn't help



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Melissa Tierce (left), an early-intervention therapist, help Bradford Boscamp discover the joys of lollipop eating.

but be impressed by how educated they were about his condition and needs. They were — and are — extremely motivated."

The Boscamps give much of the credit right back to the SCCIP staff. "They are great," said Mr. Boscamp. "They give us updates, progress reports and let us know what to expect as he gets older."

"They've just been so supportive all along the way," Mrs. Boscamp adds. "I can't imagine going through this without them." By working the golf tournament and dinner, the Boscamps hope to ensure that SCCIP can continue offering services to area children and their families.

The tournament's \$150 entry fee per person includes dinner, auction and raffle drawing. Dinner-only tickets are \$50 per person. Primary sponsors include underwriter Gadzooks Inc., as well as Perot Systems, Revatex,

Inc., KRLD (1080), KOOO (1190) and KRNB (105.7).

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