

celebrity

to its goal, and money was raised for a good cause. What could be better? Continuing the event on an annual basis, of course, which is exactly what they decided to do.

With additional board members joining the organization, the next matter of business was figuring out their cause since the vest issue had been solved. "We decided to do it for children," Boudewijn explains. "Kids are what I am about and believe in. I've had my struggles, but am blessed in many ways. I now have the opportunity to do for others and help give them a chance, as well. Dare to Share's donations to children demonstrate our commitment to this vision to pay forward for their future." The board thought it best not to have a particular charity count on them every year; instead, they spread it around. "We vote on which charities will be covered for the next project," Boudewijn says.

That next project by Dare to Share is one of which they are most proud. "We read an article in the *Gwinnett Daily Post* about a group of people in Winder who were trying to get a children's shelter for Barrow, Banks and Jackson counties, and while they had already found a location, they were going back and forth trying to make it a reality," Boudewijn says. "When we read [the article], we voted and decided that is what our charity would be." With leftover money from the first event, the children's shelter, called The Highland House, opened with a ribbon-cutting by Georgia first lady Mary Perdue. It is now fully operational, thanks in part to Dare to Share.

In 2004, the organization raised more than \$200,000 net; this year's goal is \$300,000. "Everyone is telling me, 'You are not going to do it this year,' and that is all I need," Boudewijn says. In order to raise more money, additional events and sponsors were needed. A walkathon was added this year, raising \$4,500 with only 20 participants, and a casino night with celebrity hosts actor Ivan Sergei (who also happens to be Boudewijn's son), actor Patrick Dempsey and Atlanta Falcon DeAngelo Hall, sponsored in part by *JEZEBEL*, which raised about \$30,000. To cap off the year, another star-studded signature gala will take place in September. And where will those funds go? Thirty percent will go to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and the rest, 60 percent to 65 percent, will be allocated to the Boys and Girls Club of Barrow County, Jackson County, the Treehouse, the Hemophilia Chapter in Georgia, the Autism Chapter in Georgia, the Gwinnett Children's Shelter, and Challenged Child and Friends in Hall County.

Joining in the Dare to Share force is Sergei (known for his role as David "Jill" Jillefsky on "Jack and Jill" and as Dr. Peter Winslow on "Crossing Jordan"). Sergei's been involved with Dare to Share since its inception, but this year he has stepped up his involvement and is now a member of the board. "I've always wanted to do something myself. I just haven't gotten the drive going to start a charity. But I always thought I could use acting as some way to help," he says.

Sergei's interest in Dare to Share is credited to his mother, Boudewijn. "I had just finished producing a film with Patrick in it; that's how he and I got to know each other," Sergei says. "My involvement has been trying to get people to come out here, like Patrick, as well as just carting things over to them. Anything really. And that's the way mom has helped me with my film career, too, so it's nice." Boudewijn sim-



Opposite page: Dare to Share Co-founder Francine Boudewijn with son and fellow board member, actor Ivan Sergei.

Above: Dare to Share supporters actors Patrick Dempsey, Ivan Sergei and Atlanta Falcons' DeAngelo Hall.

Below: Dare to Share board members with celebrity supporters at Casino Night.

