

# Hockey players score for kids charity

**Paul Lungen**  
Staff Reporter

The sun is shining, flowers are blooming and warm breezes are blowing – so what could be a better summertime activity than to strap on the blades and go head to head with a bunch of former NHLers.

About 100 hockey-lovers aged 18 to 60 did just that recently at the Canlan Ice Arena at York University, skating with former pros Bill Derlago, Gary Leeman, Dennis Maruk, Jack Valiquette and others.

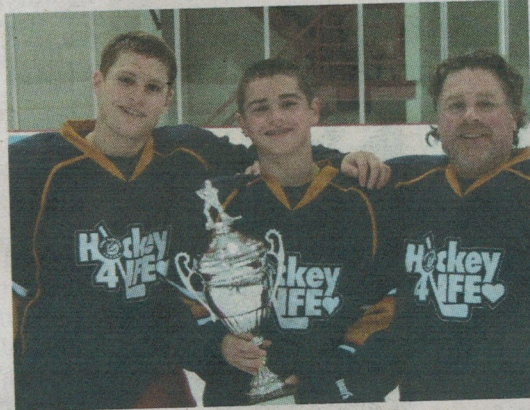
The event raised \$40,000 for Chai Lifeline's Hockey 4 Life campaign.

The tournament is one of Chai Lifeline's big annual fundraising efforts and contributes to the organization's \$850,000 annual budget.

Money raised "will go to provide support for families dealing with severe illnesses," said Mordechai Rothman, director of Chai Lifeline Canada.

Chai Lifeline provides a variety of services to families going through the emotionally challenging times dealing with children afflicted with serious illnesses, such as cancer, muscular dystrophy and cerebral palsy. About 160 families a year, many referred by social workers and medical professionals, benefit from the organization's resources, he said.

Volunteers recruited by Chai Lifeline provide tutoring services to youngsters forced by medi-



**The captain of tournament-winning Fairlane, Ari Levine, centre, is pictured with his father, Jay, and brother, Adam. Ari is a cancer survivor who participated in Chai Lifeline's programs and services when he was younger and is now giving back through participating in the tournament.**

cal necessity to miss school, they arrange support groups and counselling for parents caring for stricken children, they arrange monthly family events such as trips to the Canadian National Exhibition, Ontario Place and Canada's Wonderland, and they arrange Big Brother-type support for siblings to provide respite to stressed-out families.

One of the organization's signature events is a summer trip for sick children to Camp Sim-

cha in upstate New York. This summer, 22 kids from the Toronto area were sent to the camp, which has a hospital on site, but provides regular camp activities and more, Rothman said.

"Our philosophy is to go over the top, anything to make these kids happy for two weeks," he said. That includes free helicopter rides, free hot-air balloon rides and even preparing whatever food the youngster wants, including hamburgers for breakfast.

The camp is a big hit among children and is something they look forward to all year, he said.

Other activities provided by Chai Lifeline include a trip to Disneyworld in Florida, scheduled for later this winter.

While the largest single fundraiser for Chai Lifeline is an annual winter concert at Roy Thomson Hall – last year Marvin Hamlisch headlined it – another big sports-oriented event is marathon running. Runners are asked to raise \$3,600 and in exchange, Chai Lifeline covers marathoners' trips to races in Miami or Las Vegas.

The hockey fundraiser is a collaboration with Robert Cohen, president of Integrated mar.com. Players are recruited by Kerry Goulet, a veteran of the German league who is known in hockey circles for his charitable endeavours, said Rothman.

For more information, visit [www.chailifelinecanada.org](http://www.chailifelinecanada.org).