

Web Site Spotlight



Heart Heroes Jeanette Peters*

A non-profit organization provides superhero capes to help children with heart defects find courage.

There's a saying, "God couldn't be everywhere, so he invented Moms." But sadly, there are some places Moms can't go, like into the operating room with her child.

One Nebraska mom, Kitty Burton, whose son was born with a congenital heart defect (CHD), had an idea. Meeting through the Midwest Heart Connection support group two years ago with other moms whose children also underwent similar surgeries, she asked what she could do to wrap her son in comfort when he left her embrace to go to medical procedures and surgeries.

In a flash, not unlike the arrival of the famed comic book character, the answer came to her: A Super Hero Cape! A cape imbued with courage and love to protect him until she can put her arms around him again.

From that idea grew Heart Heroes, an organization that provides superhero capes to children born with CHD. Partnering with [Power Capes](#), the company sews and sends the capes directly to the child, Heart Heroes



provides a wonderful service to families, and also raises awareness about CHD.

More than half of the 40,000 children born with CHD each year require at least one invasive surgery in their lifetime. In the U.S., twice as many children die from CHD each year than from all forms of childhood cancers combined.

The capes go a long way in providing comfort to a child going into surgery. Many doctors will allow the cape to go as far as the operating room, and then nurses make sure it is there in recovery when the child wakes up. A cape is customized for each child, who can choose the color and emblems such as an initial or heroic symbol.

According to Kitty, her organization provides as many capes as they can to children who need them. Every penny donated goes to providing capes for more children. Even so, they have a waiting list of over 70 names. As word gets around, more people nationwide are becoming involved. One family has donated 13 capes, one for each of their own healthy children! Each donation is sent as a Gift Card to a Heart Hero in need so he or she can start designing a cape.

The Heart Heroes [web site](#) includes information on the organization and its mission, and highlights some of the kids who have benefitted by receiving superhero capes. It also includes a form to order a cape for your child, and for donating a cape to one of the many children with CHD who are still waiting to receive one.

Heart Heroes is an organization that members of the costuming community should consider supporting because it uses costumes to help vulnerable children be brave as they face surgery for their life-threatening illness.

Jeanette Peters first began costuming in the science fiction and fantasy genres, but has recently branched out to historical. She has competed or assisted backstage at costume competitions and is an enthusiastic hall costumer.