



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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A Tragedy Remembered

Rochester, Mich., July 9, 2010 -- It seems like just yesterday that Elwyn and Helen Dobson from Vassar received the phone call that every parent dreads. It was May 9, 1980 and the police were calling with bad news.

Their son, Ron Dobson, his wife Janet, and their two children, Tim and Jennifer, were traveling on Ron's private airplane to a wedding in Canada. Tragedy struck. Ron's oil pump on the plane froze up, and the plane crashed. Ron and the children had been killed and Janet was not likely to live. The shock was immediate and devastating to all. As Janet fought for her life in the hospital Ron's parents and four sisters struggled to make sense of this tragic blow to their family. Janet went on to beat the odds and was discharged from a trauma hospital more than two months later.

In August of 1980 L. Brooks Patterson, Ron's close friend and, at that time, Prosecuting Attorney for Oakland County, held a memorial golf outing for Ron and the children; The Dobson Open. That first year Mr. Patterson raised around \$2,300 and donated the money to a scholarship fund in the children's' names.

From that humble beginning has evolved what is now today the Rainbow Connection, a Michigan based 501(c)(3) charity dedicated to granting wishes for Michigan children diagnosed with life threatening illnesses who are literally fighting for their lives. From something as simple as a computer or as unique as meeting the President of the United States at The White House or a glorious trip to Disney World, The Rainbow Connection has fulfilled over 2100 wishes in the name of Ron, Timothy and Jennifer Dobson.

The Dobson Open raised almost \$100,000 last year. "We have our hearts set on breaking the \$100,000 mark this year," explains Mary Grace McCarter, Executive Director. "We anticipate fulfilling close to 200 wishes granted this year. We have never turned a child away or failed to make their wish come true and we are pretty proud of that. We live in a caring and giving place here in Michigan and, on behalf of these brave children and in the memory of Tim and Jennifer, we are so grateful to our donors."

For Helen and Elwyn Dobson, it is bittersweet as they look forward to the 31st annual Dobson Open on Monday July 26 at Great Oaks Country Club in Rochester, Michigan. "There is a pain

that comes when one loses a child that never really goes away," Helen says. "But something beautiful came out of this tragedy and that is The Rainbow Connection."

The Rainbow Connection is more than a wish. Offering support services, information and referral, special holiday get-togethers and picnics, and college scholarships for wish children, The Rainbow Connection depends exclusively on the kind generosity of its donors. Eighty-eight cents of every dollar goes to granting Michigan children a wish. For more information on how you can help visit www.rainbowconnection.org or call 248-601-9474 today.

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If you'd like more information about The Rainbow Connection, or to schedule an interview, please call 248-601-9474



Ron and Janet Dobson one month before the tragic crash



Founder L. Brooks Patterson with wish child Payton honors the Dobson Family



Tim and Jennifer loved traveling with the family.