



ASBURY PARK

PRESS

TUESDAY
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TODAY'S WEATHER



Heavy rain
High: 50;
Low: 44

75 CENTS

APP.COM

\$5G donation funds 'art cart' at Jersey Shore pediatric unit

By **KEITH BROWN**
COASTAL MONMOUTH BUREAU

NEPTUNE — Four-year-old Madison Sarcone of Howell on Thursday was the first of hundreds of children who will receive art supplies intended to help pass the time in a hospital a little more creatively.

Madison, who was receiving treatment in the pediatric unit of K. Hovnanian Children's Hospital at Jersey Shore University Medical Center, took markers, crayons, a sticker book and other items from the newly donated "art cart."

The cart was provided by ArtWork, an Englewood-based nonprofit group providing a host of art-related supplies and activities to children in hospitals in New York and New Jersey.

The rolling file cabinet painted like a box of crayons will be supplied for the next year through a \$5,000 donation from Audry Sweetwood, 13, of Bridgewater, who was on hand Thursday for the dedication, a short ceremony in the play area of the pediatric unit.

"I didn't know if I could do it at first," Audry said of raising the money for the donation. "But I just kept pushing myself."

Audry, who is an ArtWorks volunteer, began soliciting donations for the cart when she was 12. She also made and sold packs of 10 greeting cards, which she designed with her own artwork to bring in money for the cart.

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— Audry Sweetwood, 13

Daniela Mendelsohn, executive director for ArtWorks, said she had serious

Teen's gift of art keeps kid patients smiling at hospital

doubts that a pre-teen, would be able to raise the funds necessary to supply the art cart for a year.

"We have trouble getting corporations to sponsor an art cart," Mendelsohn said.

But more than a year later, Audry had raised more than enough to keep the cart supplied with coloring books, glitter glue, colored pencils and a cornucopia of other supplies. Hospital officials said the new art program will affect about 100 children a month.

"Not only is this something that can be used here, but it's something they will take with them when they leave the hospital," said Bill Faverzani, director of children's services at Meridian Health, the hospital's parent company, following the dedication. "That you would take the time to think about kids who are in a rough situation, that's amazing."

Following the dedication, Audry packed up her multicolored art cart with new supplies and pushed it down the hall of the pediatric unit, stopping first at Madison's room.

"I wanted to do something that was long-term," Audry said. "Hopefully, this will bring smiles to the kids' faces."

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Pediatric patient Madison Sarcone, 4, of Howell smiles after Audry gave her art supplies from the art cart at the hospital.



STAFF PHOTOS: TANYA BREEN

Audry Sweetwood, 13, of Bridgewater, who raised \$5,000 to donate an ArtWorks art cart for the pediatric unit at Jersey Shore University Medical Center, Neptune, walks down the hall with the cart to give patients art supplies on Thursday.