

Mah-Teel! Mah-Teel!

As International President, among other tents, I visited Hawaii and, while there, I was taken to the Variety Home for Retarded and Autistic Children.

In one room, while the teacher explained what was going on, we heard a strange noise emanating from the corner. There stood a young autistic lad of eleven years, who had not been communicative throughout the months that he had attended the school. His mother would bring him to school in the morning. He would stand with his back to everyone and then they would bring him his lunch, which he ate sitting in the corner, then standing again for the rest of the time until his mother picked him up.

When he heard my voice he suddenly turned around and started to call out "Mah-Teel!" - "Mah-Teel!". It seems that this person who was only two dimensional in the TV set, where he would watch me daily, became three dimensional in his classroom. With every "Mah-Teel!" he came closer to me and the chanting became louder: "Mah-Teel!" - "Mah-Teel! - Mah-Teel HARI!" Then he grabbed my jacket, jumping up and down with glee.

The teacher cried out for someone to summon the principal - to call his mother - to tell them the boy had come out of his autism.

It was an electrifying moment that had the teachers, my wife Marilyn, and me, sobbing with emotion. I shall never forget it.

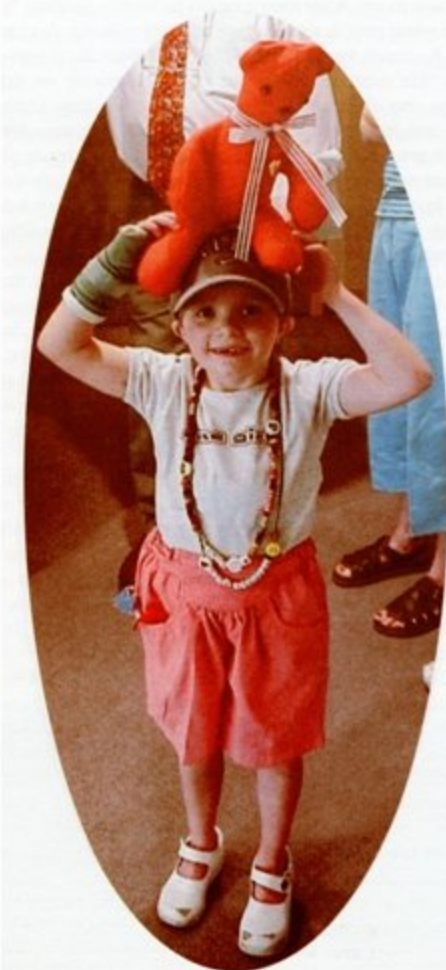
*Monty Hall - Tent 25: Southern California
International Chairman... Let's Make a Deal
We call him "Mr. Variety"*

The Spirit of Variety

I never cease to admire the spirit which created and sustains organisations like ours. The Variety Club is now renowned in this country for its dedication to helping children. It has taken its place in that great tradition of charitable giving and voluntary effort, which is rooted in the very character of the British people.

Today the Variety Club is part of that matchless web of charities and voluntary movement which enrich the life of Britain. You might have thought that with rising standards of living over the past century the need for organisations such as this would diminish. But it hasn't and it won't. There are still children who are denied a stable loving family background. And although medical science has advanced in great leaps and bounds there are still children struggling with terrible illness or pitiful handicap.

*The Baroness Thatcher - Tent 36
Past Prime Minister of Great Britain*



Amazing Jenece stands and smiles.