

HOLIDAY GIFT IDEAS

Walks Like A Duck, Talks Like A Duck, But It's Not Just A Duck

(NAPSA)—When it comes to American icons, not many would think of Ronald McDonald or the Aflac Duck. But some corporate symbols have become as much a fabric of our consciousness as Hollywood movie stars or celebrity musicians.

Company spokespeople or spokesducks are invited into living rooms across America every day on television to share news about the products they sell. But anyone familiar with Ronald McDonald House knows that the fast-food icon's service doesn't end with selling hamburgers. Likewise, for the Aflac Duck, marketing products is only part of the job. They are sources of optimism for families in need or for children fighting cancer.

Emblem Of Hope

Buffy Swinehart, who manages Aflac's philanthropy division, says that while the duck may walk like a duck and talk like a duck, he is much more than a duck. She says the star of Aflac's popular advertising campaign with the familiar cry of "Aflaaaac" doubles as a symbol of goodwill, raising millions of dollars to help kids with cancer. "We have been able to transform the Aflac duck from a corporate mascot into an emblem of hope, which is what thousands of families facing childhood cancer need most," Swinehart said.

This year, as with every year since 2001, Aflac will team with hundreds of participating Macy's department stores to sell the Aflac "Holiday Duck." The funny, wise-quacking fowl turned cancer fighter decked in holiday garb makes a wonderful gift or stocking stuffer for family and friends, with all the proceeds going to local



The funny, wisecracking Aflac Duck is also a cancer fighter.

children's hospitals to fight childhood cancer.

Of course, there is nothing funny about cancer, particularly for a parent, but the sad reality is that thousands of brave children are diagnosed each year. The good news is that children are surviving cancer with greater frequency to lead long, healthy and productive lives. In fact, the five-year survival rate for all childhood cancers has improved from less than 50 percent before the 1970s to nearly 80 percent today. The 10-year survival rate is over 75 percent.

Raises Nearly \$2 Million

Swinehart says that Aflac makes pediatric cancer research and the Aflac Cancer Center in Atlanta its primary charitable cause, donating more than \$40 million since 1998. On top of that, the Holiday Duck has proven itself to be more than a corporate icon, raising nearly \$2 million for more than 30 hospitals across the country in seven years.

The lovable creature will make its annual debut at participating Macy's department stores November 1st. As of then, ducks can also be ordered online at macys.com or at aflaholidayduck.com. The cost is \$10 for a six-inch version and \$15 for the 10-inch model.