

Tom Marshall's Weekly News, May 2, 2005

Mountain Wagon and March of Dimes, Wilmington, Early 1950s: I saw in the paper where thousands walked yesterday to benefit the March of Dimes. In the years immediately before the discovery of the Salk vaccine, I belonged to the Wilmington JayCees. One of their many projects was the "Mile of Dimes" (to benefit the March of Dimes) on Market Street between 4th and 6th, where long tapes were strung along the sidewalks parallel to the curbs on both sides of the street. Two teams of JayCee members hawked the project to passers by and placed dimes on the tapes, the east and west sides of the street competing against each other to see which tape could collect the most dimes. I would take my dad's Mountain Wagon to the site and give rides around the block to anyone who donated (and who wanted a ride). There was no Market Street Mall in those days, and traffic was heavy, but somehow a young operator didn't mind and made out fine every time. I did this for at least three consecutive years, usually in February as the March of Dimes annual drive started on F.D.R.'s birthday, January 30. (To be continued next week)