

## Check it out... **INSIDE!**

**Cancer Fears Me™**  
**page 2**

**Kids Helping Kids**  
**page 4**

**Cool Kids Activities**  
**page 5**

**Coloring Pages**  
**page 7**

**Insurance Assurance**  
**page 9**

**Emily Goes to School**  
**page 11**

**Special People -  
Your Caregivers**  
**page 14**



Connecting pediatric oncology patients throughout the nation.

## Iowa Organization Shows a "Heart" to Cancer Patients

*By Channon Timm*

The Heart Connection Children's Cancer Programs has provided support services and programs for children with cancer and their families since 1988. The organization sponsors two week-long summer camps for children with cancer and their siblings.

Approximately 300 children attend the annual camp programs designed to help them briefly escape cancer's effects.

The program also provides support groups, outings to events such as Disney on Ice, and weekend retreats for an additional 450 family members throughout the year. They provide these services for all children diagnosed and/or treated in Iowa. This includes children from every corner of the state, as well as children from western Illinois and southeastern South Dakota.

The Heart Connection summer camps are held at the Y-Camp in Boone, Iowa right by the Des Moines River. The organization utilizes more than 400

volunteers who provide over 25,000 hours of volunteer support annually. Volunteers are an intricate part of every aspect of The Heart Connection Children's Cancer Programs. They provide "behind the scenes" administrative and clerical support, contribute an essential element to fundraising efforts, staff summer camp programs, and offer leadership to the

organization. Cancer has touched many of the program's volunteers. Some are healthcare

professionals who treat cancer patients, some have a family member with cancer, and some are cancer survivors themselves.

The Heart Connection Children's Cancer Programs provides the only summer camp in Iowa devoted exclusively to children with cancer, and the sibling program was one of the first of its kind in the nation. Summer camps are provided at no cost to the families because of generous support from both individuals and organizations. Outings, weekend retreats, and hospital based programs are provided at little or no cost to participants and no one is ever turned away from an activity because of an inability to pay.

Programs offered by The Heart Connection Children's

Cancer Programs, especially the summer camps, provide a forum for children to talk about their

*continued on page 10*



*Having the time of her  
life zip lining*



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*The Cool Kids Campaign/Belanger-Federico Foundation is a 501(c)3 non-profit devoted to improving the quality of life for pediatric oncology patients and their families.*

**www.coolkidscampaign.org**



## Cancer Fears Me and the Designated Patient Fundraising Program

*How your family and friends can help raise money for you!*

Show off your strong, positive attitude towards cancer!

The Cool Kids Campaign is so pleased to introduce our newest initiative, Cancer Fears Me!

We have developed a line of merchandise and apparel with the Cancer Fears Me logo to help fund our programs for the Cool Kids Campaign, including the Cool Kids Connection.

BUT, Cancer Fears Me is also designed to directly benefit you.

Introducing, Designated Patient Fundraising! Through this program, your family, friends, school, anyone who supports your fight against cancer, can now sell the Cancer Fears Me gear and 25% of their sales will go directly back to you!

It's so easy. All you have to do is fill out a verification form that you are a current patient signed by an authorized personnel at your hospital. Then you will be registered with us and we will assign you a patient #. To get a verification form you can download one off our website or the Cancer Fears Me website or call us and we will send you one.



Then you or anyone you know can request the CFM catalog and order forms, hand them out to your supporters, have them place their orders with you as the designated patient, and we will send you a check for 25% of their sales.

Anyone can do this for you. And as many people as possible can do this for you. There is no limit on how much money will be sent to you and there are no restrictions on what you do with the money.

We know families living with cancer have many financial burdens. Cancer Fears Me is a way for you to directly raise money for yourself.

The remaining money is used to offset the costs of the items as well as helping the other families in need through the Cool Kids Campaign.

Anyone diagnosed with cancer is eligible, pediatric or adult oncology patients. And anyone can sell for you.

For more information or to get started with the Cancer Fears Me Designated Fundraising Program contact Sharon at 410-560-1770 or email at **sharon@bfpf.org**. ■

Check out our website **www.cancerfearsme.org**





All photos by  
Mitch Stringer











**APPAREL &  
ACCESSORIES**

**Get yours today!**

[www.cancerfearsme.org](http://www.cancerfearsme.org)



I have CANCER and I really DON'T like it,  
The chemo is GROSS,  
But I'm STRONG and can fight it.

I lost my hair, that was a BUMMER,  
HOPEFULLY it will grow back  
by the summer.

And with all the MEDICINE to take,  
I get nauseous, tired and a tummy ache,  
But when I'm feeling GOOD I go out,  
When I'm sick and my counts are low  
I stay home with out a doubt.

And when I'm better I'm getting  
a PONY, that's for sure,

I'll get him as soon as I get a CURE!!!!

*Brianna C., 10 years old, Hodgkins Lymphoma,  
Columbia University, NYC*



## KIDS (and Companies!) HELPING KIDS!

**Thanks to... Dani D.** from Owings Mills, MD for tagging over 300 beanie babies as gifts for cancer patients.

**Thanks to... Girl Scout Troop #680** for helping to gather toys for 100 gift bags that were delivered to University of Maryland Medical System.



**Thanks to... McKesson Corporation** for their grant to enable us to help even more kids!

**Thanks to... White Rose Figure Skating Club** for their fundraiser held during the Pennsylvania Skating Championships!



## SEND US YOUR STORY!

*Be a part of the next issue of the Cool Kids Connection!*

Share your thoughts, feelings, fears, experiences, happiness. Our goal is to connect the pediatric oncology patients throughout the nation with each other. The Cool Kids Connection is published 4 times a year and sent to the hospitals. It is by you, for you, about you! And we need YOU to make it happen. We are looking for articles, stories, poetry, drawings, photographs, puzzles, jokes, questions...anything you want to share.

**Please send your submissions by mail to:**

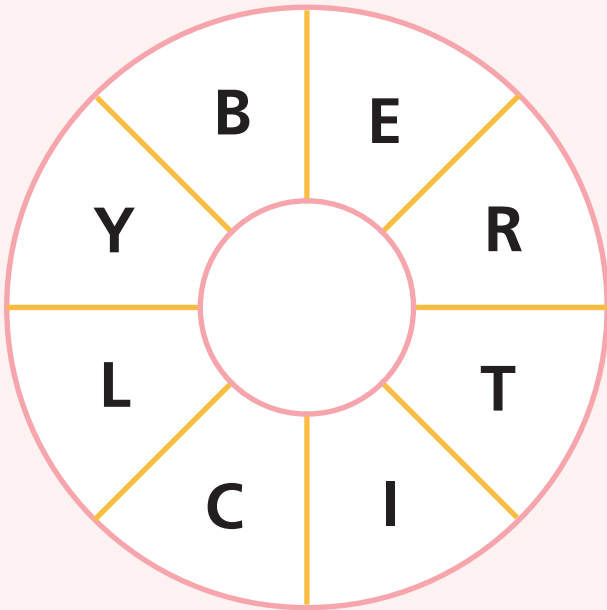
**Cool Kids Campaign**  
9711 Monroe Street  
Cockeysville, MD 21030

**or by email to [sharon@bfpf.org](mailto:sharon@bfpf.org)**

*Please include all your contact information and a photo of yourself if possible. Please send only original art – we cannot use any copyrighted material. All submissions become property of the Cool Kids Campaign. This publication is offered free of charge to oncology hospitals and their patients. Funding is received through sponsors and advertisers.*



**For advertising information, please visit our website or email [sharon@bfpf.org](mailto:sharon@bfpf.org).**



How many words can you make from the letters in the wheel? Each word must use the hub letter E. Can you find a nine letter word??

Puzzle solutions are on page 10.

# Logic Puzzles!

Test your brain with these crazy logic puzzles. Can you figure out the solutions?

## Boys in the Band

The So Kool Record company recently held auditions across the country to find four singers to form a new band. The four guys chosen are now super-stars but can you work out each guy's previous day job, his age (19, 20, 21, 22) and home town?

1. Greg is exactly two years younger or older than the guy from Cleveland who used to be a truck driver.

2. Either Darren or the guy from Seattle (who may or may not be Patrick) used to deliver pizzas.

3. The guy from New York is younger than Daniel but older than the one who used to be a carpenter.

4. The 22 year old from San Francisco isn't the one who used to be a waiter.

Name	Job	City	Age
1			
2			
3			
4			

## Megabucks Movies

Megabucks Studios produced four movies last year. Can you match the name of each actor with the type of film he starred in, the film location, the month it was released (one was released in July) and the amount each movie grossed (\$9m, \$11m, \$12m, \$15m)?

1. The movie filmed in Los Angeles was released later in the year than the comedy movie.

2. Nick Page was the star of the movie which grossed more than the horror movie but less than at least one of the other movies.

3. The movie released in March grossed \$1m or \$2m more or \$1m or \$2m less than one

starring Steve Connelly (whose movie either grossed \$12m or was released in May).

4. The science fiction movie (not released in October) didn't gross as much as the movie filmed in New York (which was the one released either three months before or three months after the movie starring Will Bryce).

5. The action movie was released later in the year than the one which grossed \$11m and earlier in the year than the movie filmed in Boston.

6. The movie starring Tom Rowe grossed either \$2m or \$3m more than the one filmed in Las Vegas.

Actor	Type	Location	Month	\$M
1				
2				
3				
4				

Riddle Time!

A little girl goes to see the doctor. She's got a pea in one nostril, a grape in the other, and a string bean stuck in her ear. She says to the doctor, "I don't feel good."  
The doctor replies, "The problem is clear to me. You're not eating right!"

- Q. What did the chewing gum say to the shoe?**  
A. I'm stuck on you.
- Q. The math teacher saw that little Johnny wasn't paying attention in class. She called on him and said, "Johnny! what are 4, 2, 28 and 44?"**  
A. Little Johnny quickly replied, "NBC, CBS, HBO and the Cartoon Network!"
- Q. Have you heard about the restaurant on the moon?**  
A. Great food, no atmosphere!
- Q. What do you call a fairy that hasn't taken a bath?**  
A. Stinkerbell
- Q. Why do birds fly south?** A. Because it's too far to walk.
- Q. Which word in the dictionary is spelled incorrectly?**  
A. Incorrectly
- Q. How do change a pumpkin into another vegetable?**  
A. You throw it in the air and it comes down squash.
- Q. Why is Dracula so unpopular?** A. He's a pain in the neck.
- Q. Why does a flamingo lift up one leg?**  
A. Because if he lifted up both legs it would fall down!
- Q. What has forty feet and sings?**  
A. The school choir!
- Q. What sort of animal is a slug?** A. A snail with a housing problem!
- Q. If two's company and three's a crowd, what are four and five?**  
A. Nine!
- Q. What is the smartest kind of bee?** A: A spelling bee.
- Q. What kind of food does a racehorse eat?** A: Fast food.
- Q. Why should you never tell a secret to a pig?**  
A: Because he'll squeal!
- Q. Why shouldn't you play cards in the jungle?**  
A: Because of all the cheetahs.

And just for fun...

- Teacher:** If  $1+1=2$  and  $2+2=4$ , what is  $4+4$ ?  
**Pupil:** That's not fair! You answered the easy ones and left me with the hard one!
- Teacher:** Now class I want you all to answer at once.  
How much is  $6+4$ ?  
**Class:** At once!

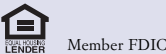
HUMOR FOR LEXOPHILES  
(those who love words)

- I wondered why the baseball was getting bigger. Then it hit me.
- Police were called to a day care center where a three-year-old was resisting a rest.
- Did you hear about the guy whose whole left side was cut off? He's all right now.
- The roundest knight at King Arthur's round table was Sir Cumference.
- The butcher backed up into the meat grinder and got a little behind in his work.
- When fish are in schools they sometimes take debate.
- The short fortune teller who escaped from prison was a small medium at large.
- A thief fell and broke his leg in wet cement. He became a hardened criminal.
- When the smog lifts in Los Angeles, U.C.L.A.
- The math professor went crazy with the blackboard. He did a number on it.
- The dead batteries were distributed free of charge.
- When the dentist married the manicurist, they fought tooth and nail.
- A will, is a dead giveaway.
- Time flies like an arrow; fruit flies like a banana.
- A backward poet writes inverse.
- In a democracy it's your vote that counts; in feudalism, it's your Count that votes.
- If you don't pay your exorcist you may get repossessed.
- When a clock is hungry it goes back four seconds.
- When a grenade fell onto a kitchen floor in France, it resulted in Linoleum Blownapart.

WE SUPPORT THE  
COOL KIDS CAMPAIGN.  
BECAUSE THEY'RE  
OUR KIDS, TOO.

A strong community is a vibrant, living thing. The more we all participate in it, the more it grows. Which is why we're happy, and honored, to participate in any way we can.

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Color Me Silly!









## Insurance Assurance

### Hints to help sort out the confusion

By Linda Novak

Although it is understandable that you may be inclined to put your medical bills and insurance statements aside in order to spend more time with your child and attend to his or her needs you need to have an alternative plan. Consider enlisting the help of a friend or family member that you can assign the task of reviewing your paperwork. You may also be able to enlist the support and assistance of your employer's Human Resource Department or you may be able to assign the task to your group's health insurance broker.

At a minimum you should review statements from your insurance carrier so you can identify services or providers that are not covered under your benefits plan. Many services require pre-authorization by your insurance carrier in order to receive benefits. If you wait to review your statements you may be forfeiting thousands of dollars in benefits that could have been paid if you would have realized that you were required to follow certain procedures BEFORE services were rendered. You don't want to wait until a series of claims for the same service have been denied before you realize what was required in order for payment to be made by the carrier. More often than not insurance companies will not do retroactive authorizations after the services have been rendered and claims will remain denied with no benefits paid.

If you only review your insurance carrier statements, referred to as Explanation of Benefits, periodically you may also be unaware that certain providers of care are not recognized by your health insurance carrier. This will result in either a denial of the claim for the services rendered or the provider may not accept the amount determined by your insurance carrier to be the allowed amount (the full

amount that providers participating with your plan agree to accept for their services as payment in full). This is especially possible since there are likely to be providers that have rendered their services that you are not aware of. This can be anyone from a hospital staff physician who provides care for your patient because he/she is on duty when care is required or a provider that reads x-ray results but who has never physically seen the patient.

When care is rendered by a physician that does not participate with your health insurance plan there is often no limit to the amount they can charge for their services. Alternatively, when care is rendered by providers that do participate with

liability.

If your provider of preference does not participate with your insurance plan you may consider finding out what carriers/plans they do participate with and asking them to accept the allowed amount they would be paid by that carrier or plan as payment in full for their services. If they are agreeable to this arrangement you may want to document this agreement in writing. In order to execute this arrangement you will need the assistance of an insurance professional, perhaps someone in your health insurance broker's office, to work with your provider and the carriers to provide you with these figures.

When you are bombarded with numerous statements the best way to monitor them is to create a spreadsheet that includes the name of the provider, the date the service was rendered, the amount charged, the allowed amount as determined by the carrier, the amount paid by the carrier, amounts the provider may be required to write off, the amount that is your liability and the amount that you ultimately paid the provider. Without such a log it becomes difficult to recall which bills you have already paid and which are outstanding because providers tend to send monthly statements that may not reflect recent payments depending upon the date the statements are produced. You also want to make sure that the bills reflect the proper write-off of the disallowed amounts.

The spreadsheet may seem overwhelming but in the long run it will save you a great amount of time, help to keep you organized and assist you in verifying that you are correctly billed by providers. If you have a health savings or health reimbursement account you may also wish to add columns for those amounts reimbursed by this account.

The task of keeping the spreadsheet is a job that you should consider assigning to a trusted friend, family member or advisor. There are likely to be a number of people who sincerely want to do something to help ease your burdens and who would gladly tackle this task. They could keep you informed of the status of the spreadsheet by emailing you copies and updates. ■

*Linda Novak is a Claims Resolution Specialist at Group Insurance Solutions Inc. (GISI) in Hunt Valley, MD*

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*...your insurance coverage can potentially save you thousands of dollars in medical expenses...*

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your benefits plan they have a contract with the insurance carrier that limits the amount they can charge for their services. The difference between their charges and the allowed amount, as determined by your insurance carrier, must be written off by providers that participate with your insurance plan. This amount is generally referred to as the disallowed amount. This is an often overlooked way that your insurance coverage can potentially save you thousands of dollars in medical expenses that would otherwise be your



Sibling campers dancing the night away



Oncology Camp 2007



Crazy Horse cabin showing they have talent

*continued from cover page*

feelings. Both the child with cancer and their siblings spend time with other children who can honestly say, “I understand how you feel.” For the child who has been diagnosed with cancer it is the chance to talk to someone that has just completed treatment, a chance to see that there is hope. For siblings it is an opportunity to learn that their feelings are not odd, but instead are normal and healthy. Both groups build a network of peer support—a group of friends available when they need to talk with someone who “understands.”

One camper who lost her brother to cancer describes the difference between friends from school and friends from camp, “When my brother died, my friends (from school) wanted to cheer me up and make me laugh. My friends (from camp) knew that I just needed to cry, and they cried with me. I didn’t have to tell them that’s what I needed, they just knew.”

Camp “is the only place where she doesn’t have to defend or explain all the scars. Every cabin mate has physical signs of treatment.”

“Camp is just a place to have fun & meet new people, make new friends. You get to get away from people who misjudge you and when you come to camp no one will misjudge you because they know what it feels like to have cancer.”

“Camp helped me forget about (my cancer) and (reminded me) that I was not the only kid with cancer. I am not the only one with special needs.” ■

*If you would like more info about The Heart Connection Children’s Cancer Programs please contact Channon Timm at 515-243-6239. Please visit their website at [www.ChildrensCancerPrograms.com](http://www.ChildrensCancerPrograms.com).*

ANSWERS

Letter Wheel Solution: 9 letter word – Celebrity

Logic Puzzle Solutions:

Boys in the Band

- 1 - Daniel, Truck Driver, Cleveland, 21
- 2 - Darren, Pizza Delivery, San Francisco, 22
- 3 - Greg, Carpenter, Seattle, 19
- 4 - Patrick, Waiter, New York, 20

Megabucks Movies Solution

- 1 - Nick Page, Comedy, Las Vegas, March, \$12M
- 2 - Steve Connolly, Science Fiction, LA, May, \$11M
- 3 - Tom Rowe, Action, New York, July, \$15M
- 4 - Will Bryce, Horror, Boston, October, \$9M



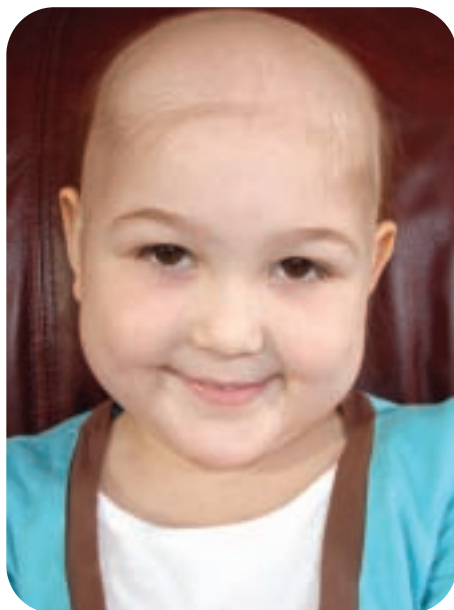


# Emily Goes to School...

By Lisa G. Fallston, MD,  
Mother to Emily, ALL,  
Johns Hopkins Hospital

Most parents keep baby books filled with milestones and dates along with treasured photos. We can rattle off at what age our child walked, talked, and what his or her first word was with perfect recollection. As a parent of a child with cancer, we possess many additional milestones and dates that are forever engraved in our minds, many of which are not so celebratory. I will forever remember Emily's date of diagnosis, the day her chemotherapy began, and the day her port was put in her chest for her to receive chemo. I know many families in the cancer world that celebrate yearly anniversary dates. While many let them pass quietly, with only the recognition that they made it through yet another year. And then, there is the ultimate date. A date that is filled with hope- the day when our child is considered cured.

Even normal childhood special occasions such as a birthday come with many mixed emotions for families with cancer. As our daughter Emily celebrated her birthday in September, it was exactly 3 months after she had been diagnosed with Pre-B Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia. It was a special day filled with many emotions, for us mostly silently thanking God that she was still with us on her 6th birthday.



*Still going through treatments in November*

As the first day of school came looming ahead, it was indeed yet another date tearing at my heart. Our 9 year old daughter was happy and bubbling with excitement to meet her new teacher and see her friends. Emily however, exhausted from chemo, slept through what should have been her first day of Kindergarten. It saddened me that there was no video camera rolling, no pictures being taken, and certainly no back to school shopping for her. It was indeed an emotional day, Emily was not jumping on that bus to independence, and experiencing what should have been the next exciting milestone in her life.

You see, with chemotherapy, comes many side effects. Many of which people know about. However, most people are not aware of the fact that our kids are at times severely immune compromised. With this comes a lot of isolation and almost always a lot of missed school. It turned out that there were many positives to this arrangement however. With being stuck at home, came Ms. Elyse, Emily's warm and friendly home tutor. Three days a week, for two hours I had time to myself, and Emily had some education and fun with someone other than Mom! While it was not school, it was a different face with new ideas. Emily always looked forward to Ms. Elyse's arrival.

As the weeks of treatment turned into months, we began to see some light at the end of the tunnel. We began discussing with



*Emily's kindergarten teacher, Mrs. MacDonald, stops by for a pre back to school visit*



*A good teacher goes a long way*

Emily's oncologist at Johns Hopkins what things would be like when she entered the 2 year "Maintenance" phase of her treatment protocol. From the beginning of her treatment, we were told that Maintenance would be more like "normal" living. Normal is a word that all of us families who have kids with cancer use with quotes around it! I can say with certainty that we are sure that our lives are still far from normal. However, after living through the many months of the more rigorous chemo, we found ourselves really looking forward to Maintenance. The date finally arrived on January 17th, a little over 7 months from her diagnosis. Emily was officially in Maintenance, and it meant freedom! Emily could now go to school, birthday parties, playdates, and whatever else she was up for. It meant less trips to Hopkins and the arrival of a new hairdo. The timing of her new growth of hair couldn't have been more perfect!

Going back to school was a process and there was quite a bit of preparation for the "big day." We simply could not just put her on the bus and say good luck! There were forms to be filled out, letters from her doctor, meetings to be scheduled,



and the most important of all-preparing Emily for a huge change in her life (again)! We started discussing school with Emily soon after Christmas. Because we were not exactly sure when she was going to be able to start school, we wanted to give her plenty of notice.

After being at home with Mom for 7 months, we were prepared for separation issues.

We were also pretty sure she was going

to be exhausted. The chemo had really done a number on her stamina. Then, there were the concerns for Emily at school. Obviously, schools are very germmy places. Even though she would be in Maintenance, Emily's immune system was not that of a normal child. We continued to remind her of the importance of using hand sanitizer or washing her hands. As her Mom, I had many concerns of my own, especially since now more than ever we are very protective of her. Significantly, the social issues were a concern. Would the kids make fun of her new fuzzy hair

coming in? After all, at best she had a "buzz cut." Emily was never into wearing hats and definitely would never even consider a wig! However, she did like to wear headbands, which was a good compromise. We also worried that she was the new

kid. Would she make friends? I also wondered if she was behind academically. She seemed to

me small, fragile, and extremely vulnerable.

As her school start date approached, I considered home schooling Emily. I was thinking that it would protect her from all of the germs, the rude stares, and the potential distress that could occur for her. That is until her oncologist asked me "were you planning on home schooling her before she was diagnosed?" While home schooling is great for some, it was not on our previous agenda. So he was right, she needed to go to school. We all had to face our fears.

From the beginning of the school year, we had been in touch with Emily's Kindergarten teacher. Emily's home tutor had also kept her teacher in the loop. Around the first week of school in September, I had sent in copies of a letter to all of the families in Emily's class. The letter introduced Emily to them and explained her cancer. I had even included a picture of her so they knew what she looked like. Her teacher had obviously done an excellent job of keeping Emily very real to the kids. She had her own cubby. They made her a book, a poster, and her teacher even came to our house to meet Emily. We continued to keep in contact, sending in more pictures and letters from Emily to her class. The week before she was to start school, we came in to visit and to take a tour of the school. We were as ready as we would ever be...

*"Emily, exhausted from chemo, slept through what should have been her first day of Kindergarten."*

Emily has been in school almost 2 months now. It has been a learning experience for all of us. Honestly, it has only been in the past 2 weeks where Emily seems to finally be in the routine of going to school. Does she like it? Well, that is a question very delicately answered. Some days yes, others no. There are many factors that contribute to Emily's answer of the age old question "how was your day at school"? That depends if she was made fun of that day for her "boy haircut," or if her tummy hurt, or simply if she was just missing Mom. It is hard to see her struggle. We know that Emily feels very different from the rest of the kids. She does worry a lot about germs and getting sick. She holds back a lot more than she ever did before cancer. We have had to adopt a tough love approach while muddling through this. There are many days where she complains from the moment

she is awake about

every ailment under the sun, "my belly, my throat, my head, and my knee all hurt, I can't go to school today!" So we do our best to "fix" all of these complaints, and off she goes to school.

About a month into school (and coincidentally right after she began to go full day) Emily decided she had a

new trick up her sleeve.

Figuring that her morning

complaints were not keeping her home from school, she tried a new tactic. On several occasions, she was even able to convince us that she needed to come home early. She refused to eat her lunch, and complained of tummy trouble. Realizing that stomach issues have been a part of her life since the beginning treatment, it really was a tough call to figure out whether it was sickness (chemo related or a possible virus), anxiety, or simply "I wanna come home!" She still for the most part refuses to eat lunch at school, I guess she thinks her hunger strike may work again



*Finally back in school!*





Learning where and what a “cubbie” is...

sometime. She sure is hungry when she gets home from school though!

We have considered having her visit the school counselor, which may need to happen in the future. Unfortunately, Emily is just one of those kids who really does not open up easily with her feelings. We certainly wouldn’t rule out the idea of her talking to someone trained in this area, to see

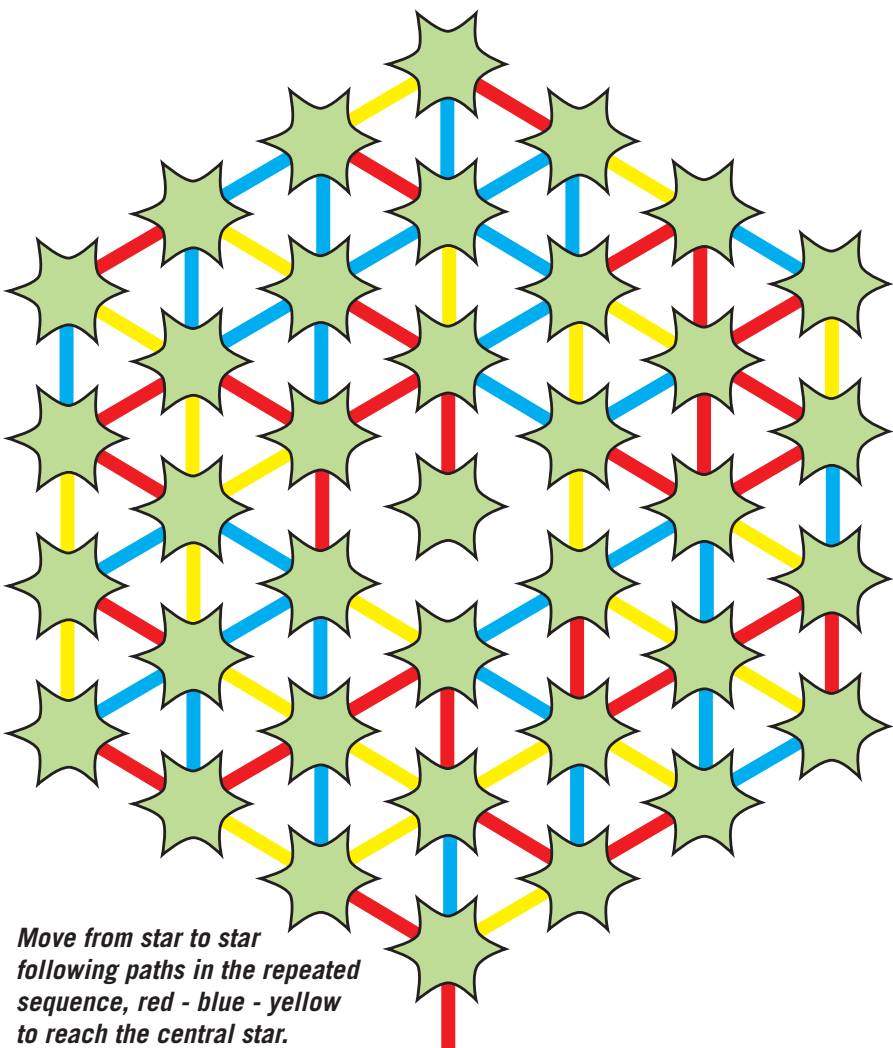
how she really feels about all that we have asked her to handle! As far as getting through the day, it too has been a very hard transition to go from 1/2 to full day. She really is quite ready to come home after lunch, and going all day really wears her out. Moving to the full day though was important for her to feel more a part of the class. Getting into the regular routine of going to school was important, yet also has proved to be a challenge. Between the various school closings, and her being sick, she has missed a good amount of school already. As well as the fact that just about every Thursday, she does not attend school due to her regularly scheduled clinic days at Hopkins.

It is comforting to know that all of our milestones now should be good ones. We have hope that our family will continue to slip into a comfortable pattern of "normal," and school will be a positive place for Emily to go. Just this morning, I dropped Emily off at school (she still has yet to want to ride the "scary" bus) and her teacher gave me the thumbs up sign. "She’s doing good" she called across the room. What more can we ask for? ■

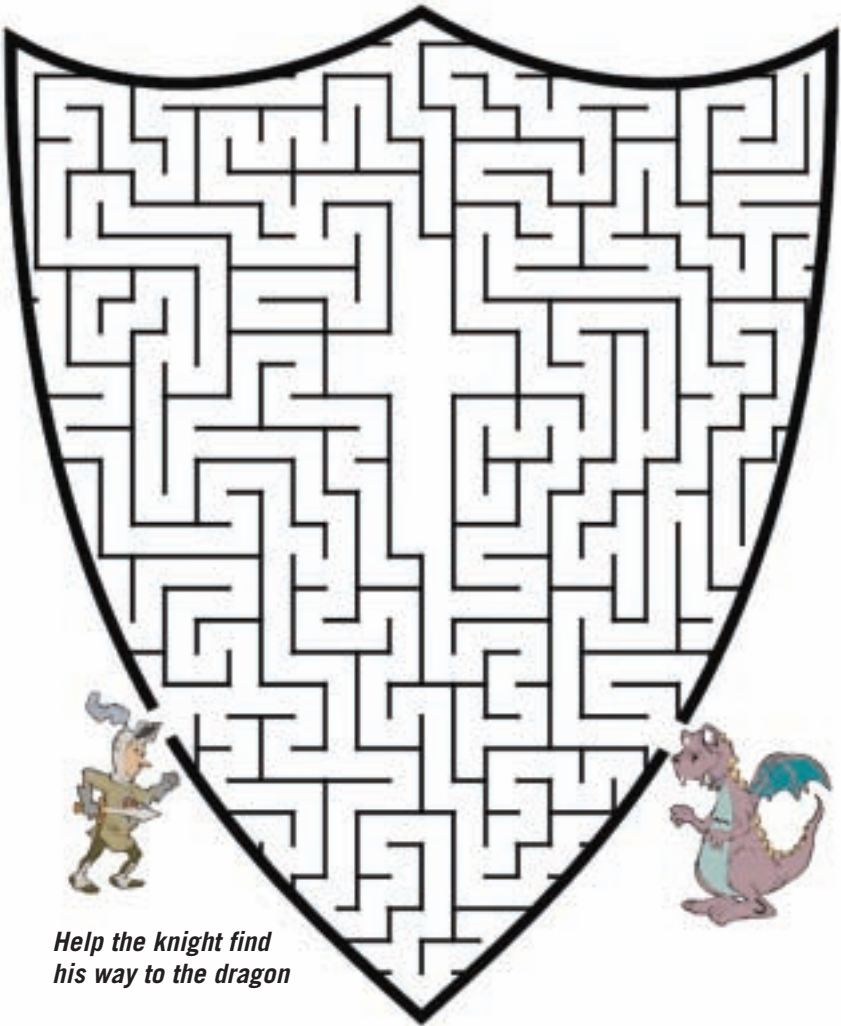


This won't be so bad

# SPRING



Move from star to star following paths in the repeated sequence, red - blue - yellow to reach the central star.



Help the knight find his way to the dragon



# IT TAKES A SPECIAL PERSON:

By Molly Lauryssens

It takes a special person to work with children and their families, especially when they endure through an illness. Jill Hamilton, Lauren Lux and Doris Luna are no exception. However, they don't want any credit. These three women, peppered throughout the United States, gave us the inside scoop on what it's like in their varying roles in pediatric oncology. Check out what they had to say, in their own words, and see how much you have in common with them. I'll bet you have more in common than you might think!

## Jill Hamilton

**Where do you live?** Roanoke, VA

**What is your title?** Child Life Department Manager for Carilion Clinic Children's Hospital

**What do you do?** I am a Certified Child Life Specialist who serves on the in-patient pediatric unit, pediatric intensive care unit, and hematology/oncology clinic. My main goal everyday is to help kids decrease their fears with procedures or just being in the hospital. I do that by explaining what the kids will expect when they (for example) get diagnosed with cancer, get their ports accessed, lose their hair, etc. I try to help ease their experiences and make their days better even if they're sick.

**What is your favorite thing about your job?** Making my patients smile and empowering them to handle the struggles they're faced with due to their diagnosis.

**Least favorite thing about your job?** Difficult social situations with families.

**What time does your normal day start?** 9 a.m.

**Do you have children?** No, but one day I would love to have a litter of children! :)

**What is your favorite sport to watch?** Some people may not consider this a sport, but I love watching dance team competitions! Other than that, I like to watch SEC Football.

**To play?** Flag football

**What do you like to do for fun?** Spending time with my friends and loved ones watching movies, hiking, or traveling.

**What is your favorite movie?** Elf and French Kiss

**What is your favorite book?** Water for Elephants



**What was your favorite subject in school growing up?** History

**Favorite cereal?** Fruit Loops

**Favorite dessert?** Red Velvet Cake or anything with chocolate.

**Favorite kind of food?** Thai Food

**Favorite board game?** Clue

**Favorite card game?** UNO Attack

**Cats or dogs?** Dogs

**Favorite celebrity?** Brad Pitt

**Favorite season?** Spring

**If you could have dinner with one person, dead or alive, who would it be and why?** My grandparents from my father's side. They passed away before I was born, and I'm told I am a lot like my grandmother.

**What is on your IPOD? If you don't have one, what CD's are in your car right now?** Dave Matthews Band, Jack Johnson, Counting Crowes, etc.

## Lauren Lux

**Where do you live?** Chicago, IL

**What is your title?** Social Work Intern – I graduated from the University of Chicago on June 13th with my master's degree in social work.

**What do you do?** I intern at the University of Illinois at Chicago Medical Center in the pediatric Oncology Department. I help families deal with the challenges they face when their child is diagnosed with cancer. I link them to financial resources and support groups, provide brief

counseling for both inpatient and outpatient kids and families dealing with cancer, and basically help with anything else that comes up that doesn't fall under the medical team's responsibilities.

**What is your favorite thing about your job?** I have the privilege of working with amazing families and kids who I respect and feel honored to work with. And I get to work with doctors, nurses, and other organizations who love and care about kids.

**Least favorite thing about your job?** Knowing how hard it is for the kids that we work with to go through their treatments.

**What time does your normal day start?** I get up around 6am to workout before I head to the hospital. I usually get to the hospital by 8:30am or so.

**What is your favorite sport to watch?** Basketball...I'm so happy that it's March...NCAA tournament March madness time!

**To play?** Basketball. I played basketball in college for Webster University and I love to play the game.

**Do you have any children of your own?** Nope. My boyfriend and I have 2 puppies, if that counts.

**What do you like to do for fun?** Spend time with friends and family, be outside (hiking, running, playing), play or watch sports, read, listen to music, watch movies, play with our puppies.

**What is your favorite movie?** The Princess Bride

**What is your favorite book?** The Five People You Meet in Heaven

**What was your favorite subject growing up?** English...I really enjoy writing.

**Favorite cereal?** Honey nut cheerios

**Favorite dessert?** ice cream, any kind

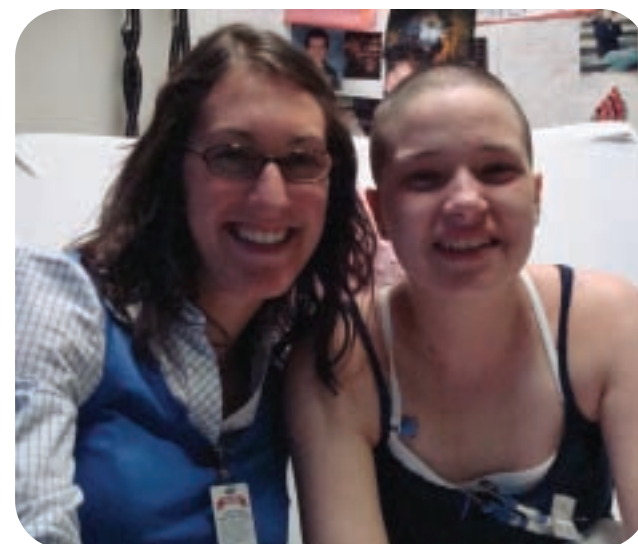
**Favorite kind of food?** I love love love food....any kind of food. My brother is in culinary school, so I get to try lots of new things all the time.

**Favorite board game?** Scene It

**Favorite Card Game?** Spades

**Cats or dogs?** Dogs – We have two of them...both mutts...Macaroni (aka Mac) and Nala.

**Favorite celebrity?** John Cusack – for all of the fantastic roles he played in the 80's.





**Favorite season?** Fall – great weather to be outside, pretty leaves, basketball season is starting, and I love Halloween.

**If you could have dinner with one person, dead or alive, who would it be and why?** I would have to say it would be 2 someones. Both of my parents passed away several years ago and I would want to have dinner with them. I would love to catch up, tell them about my life and about what I'm doing now. It would be great to see them again!

**What is on your IPOD? If you don't have one, what CD's are in your car right now?**

Mixes of any and everything – country, rap, pop, classical, jazz, indy – gotta keep it interesting.

## Doris Luna

**Where do you live?** Sacramento, near the river on a small golf course

**What is your title?** Nurse Case Manager (Certified Pediatric Oncology Nurse)

**What do you do?** Coordinate care for patient's treatment in clinic, hospital and at home.

**What is your favorite thing about your job?** Seeing kids smile and laugh.

**Least favorite thing about your job?** Paperwork

**What time does your normal day start?** 7am

**What is your favorite sport to watch?** Football

**To play?** Golf

**Do you have any children of your own?** 3 boys, who are now grown up.

**What do you like to do for fun?** Play golf with my husband and friends.

**What is your favorite movie?** No real favorite, like action, romance just nothing scary.

**What is your favorite book?** No real favorite, Read lots of fiction.

**What was your favorite subject growing up?** P.E.

**Favorite cereal?** Granola

**Favorite dessert?** Anything Chocolate

**Favorite kind of food?** Mexican food

**Favorite board game?** Candy Land was a favorite as a young child.

**Favorite card game?** Hand and Foot

**Cats or dogs?** Dogs – have a dog Goldie who is a Jack Russell Terrier.

**Favorite celebrity?** can't come up with favorite...not that important to me.

**Favorite season?** Summer-I like the warm sunny weather.

**If you could have dinner with one person, dead or alive, who would it be and why?** If I could figure out who would be the person to talk with that would make all the kids better.

**What is on your IPOD? If you don't have one, what CD's are in your car right now?** Fun upbeat music to walk on the treadmill.



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