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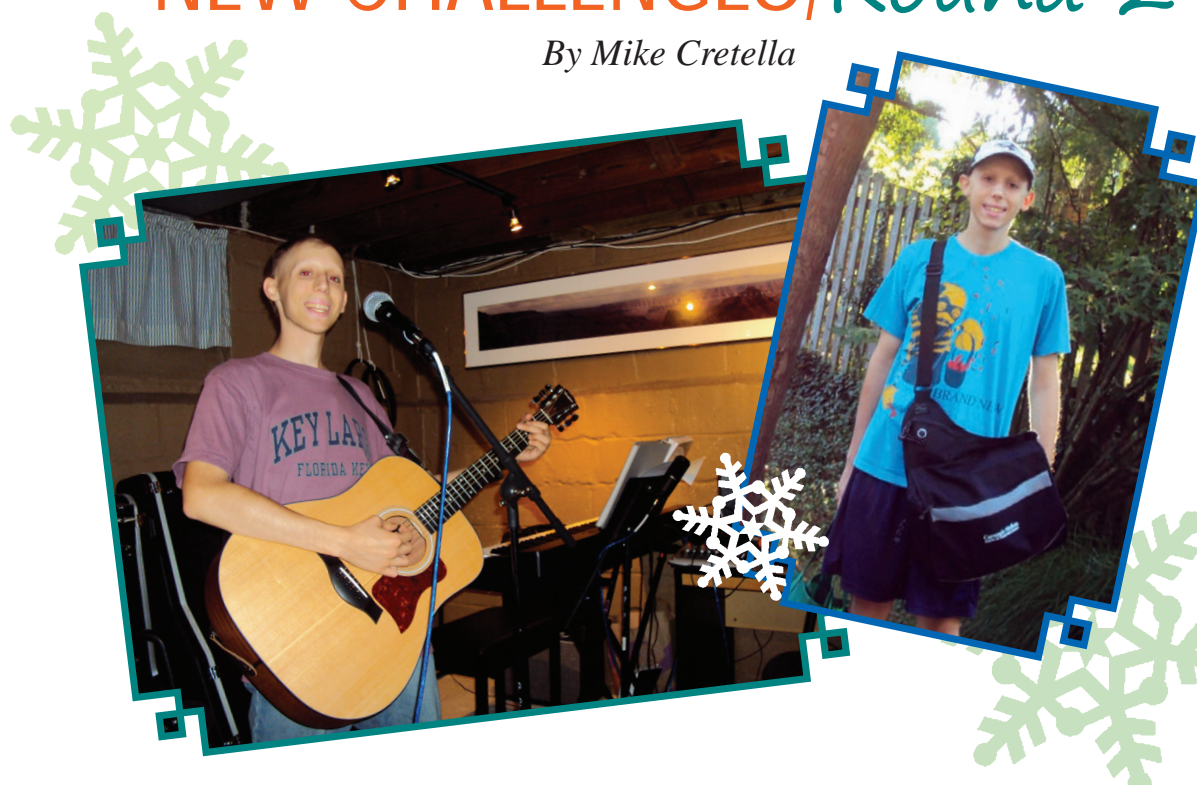
Cool Kids & Cool  
 Caregivers



Connecting Pediatric Oncology Patients Throughout The Nation

NEW CHALLENGES, Round 2

By Mike Cretella



Last time I wrote an article for Cool Kids, I was in remission. I was finishing up a year of treatment, I was getting ready to graduate with my class, and I was very excited to head off to Carnegie Mellon in the fall. So when something was found on my routine scans last July, I didn't have to think twice about what it could mean. I had already achieved so much in the last 18 months, but in essence I was right back where I had started 18 months ago. So it left me with a new challenge: what could I do this time, that I hadn't done last time, that would keep me cancer-free?

The way I look at things, I should focus only on the things that I can control, and commit all my strength and willpower to them. So I thought: "What exactly do I control?" I can try to live a healthy lifestyle, which means I should focus my efforts on eating right, exercising and being happy. The body goes through tremendous stress during chemotherapy, it requires more calories and nutrients than an average person does. I know it's hard to get food in during

chemotherapy, so it's important to make the food count. I started juicing vegetables, which releases more vitamins versus cooking, and making fruit smoothies. Smoothies and juice are much easier to sip and get down compared to solid food, also. Exercise is not only good for your body, but it's a lot of fun; In my opinion, nothing beats a good game of football with your friends. Also, keeping a stress-free lifestyle is very important to me, Being happy is, itself, a boost for your immune system. I'm taking two challenging classes at Loyola that are a lot of fun. By succeeding in class at Loyola, it has made me a lot more confident about going to Carnegie Mellon next fall.

Going there cancer-free, and staying that way is the ultimate goal. And I'm never going to forget that.

Check out Mike's music at  
<http://grenaders.info>





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*No one knows what it is really like to go through a cancer journey unless you have walked in those shoes. It is a unique situation for each child and their family, yet we hope that hearing what other kids have gone through will help you know what to expect and find it comforting that others have gone through it.*

*We pulled together five Cool Kids and their moms for a roundtable discussion about their experience with cancer. All five of these Cool Kids are now done their cancer treatments and have successfully moved on with their lives. However, they still carry with them the memories of that challenging time in their life. Some of those memories aren't great but all of them agree that they learned a lot about themselves and others and even have some positive memories.*

#### Our group included:

**Eddie** – 14 years old, diagnosed with ALL T-cell at age 10. He was in treatment for 3 ½ years and has been out of treatment for one year.

**Ben** – 13 years old, diagnosed with Ewings Sarcoma at age 8. He was in treatment for one year and is four years out of treatment.

**Matthew** – 11 years old, diagnosed with PNET (Primitive Neuroectodermal Tumor) when he was just 4 weeks old. He was in treatment for a year and a half (with a PEG to help with feeding for another 6 years) and has been out of treatment for 10 years.

**Billy** – 10 years old, diagnosed with Pre-B ALL when he was five. He was in treatment for 3 ½ years and has been out of treatment for a year and a half.

**Kyrilee** – 13 years old, diagnosed with ALL two weeks before her 4th birthday. She was in treatment for 26 weeks and is 7 years out of treatment.

#### *How did you feel when you were first diagnosed with cancer?*

**Ben**- I felt really scared and I didn't want to stay at the hospital that long. I would miss my family and my friends. I didn't know what was going to happen to me.

**Billy**- I was really scared and I didn't know anyone and I was just really scared.

**Matt**- I was just a baby so I didn't know anything.



**Eddie**- I didn't know what was going on so I just laid there, they wouldn't let me move. I went along with everything. I remember my coaches brought me Taco Bell.

**Kyrilee** - I can't remember anything. When Ben was diagnosed I remember telling him that he would be okay, that it wasn't a big deal and that he would lose his hair.

**Kyrilee's mom, Resalee** - She was really depressed which was hard to see in a three year old. It was Easter and she didn't even want to look for her Easter Basket.

#### *Did people treat you differently? How? Did you like that or not?*

**Ben**- Yes, they did. I felt like I was pitied. Sometimes I liked it, sometimes not. I was in a body cast and bald so they looked at me and wondered what was wrong. My mom would tell me to smile because I was fine and people needed to know that.

**Billy**- I don't know.

**Billy's Mom, Kim**- They all stood back and stared because he was bald but when they found out they could sign his head, everything was normal.

**Eddie**- People sent cards. When I first went to school they gave me a huge box.

**Eddie's Mom, Ladonna**- They treated him like a rock star. He was down to 57lbs and everyone was shocked by how frail he was.

**Kyrilee**- My church sent me a laundry basket called a sunshine box. It was filled with coloring pages and stuff and whenever I had a bad day I could pick something.

**Matt's Mom, Stu** - He was miserable while he had his tumor but once they removed it he smiled all the time. He is one of six kids so being around his family helped him.

#### *What would you say to someone who just found out they had cancer?*

**Kyrilee**- It will be alright, just think good thoughts. If you want to get better then you have to think you will.

**Ben**- You can't give up hope, that's one thing you need. Make friends. Smile and try to have a good time. Find time to laugh and have a good time. Meet your nurses and doctors.

**Matt**- Think positive thoughts because it's going to be okay.

**Eddie**- It is what it is. Enjoy life to the fullest.

**Eddie's Mom, Ladonna**- We are big on the serenity prayer.

**Billy**- Keep on going.

#### *What was the worse thing (or bad memory) about having cancer?*

**Eddie**- Oh, the needles. Two needles right into your legs for chemo and Lovenox to get rid of the clots. I got \$100 from my grandfather for my last asparaginase (chemo drug).

**Ben**- Bactrim, I had to take it three days a week and it was horrible. I missed all my friends from home and I didn't get to see my sister and dad much because I was always in the hospital bed.

**Kyrilee**- Probably just the medication.

**Kyrilee's mom, Resalee**- It changed her in every way, once a month and made her really depressed. She was pale, depressed and would just stare out the windows.

**Matt**- I was told I didn't like the needles.

**Billy**- The thing I probably hated the most was missing my family and I cried a lot because I wanted to go home.

#### *Was there anything good (or a good memory) about having cancer?*

**Eddie**- The cruise from Make A Wish to Western Caribbean.

**Ben**- Make A Wish and Give Kids the World Village. Also meeting all the nurses and doctors at

Hopkins. And Camp Sunrise.

**Kyrilee**- Give Kids the World Village in Florida and meeting the doctors and making another family at the hospital.

**Billy**- Give Kids the World and meeting friends at camp.

**Matt**- Give Kids the World.

#### *What was your favorite thing to do when your counts were down and you couldn't be around anyone but family?*

**Ben**- Video games, watching t.v., playing games with my mom.

**Eddie**- The computer, whatever games we could find, legos.

**Billy**- Visit with friends that were in the hospital. We would all get in bed together and play video games. The best game was putting apple juice in our urine cups and pretending to drink it when the nurses came in.

**Matt**- Playing with my brothers and sisters.

**Kyrilee** – Playroom, cafeteria.

**Kyrilee's mom, Resalee** – She loved the cafeteria. She craved croutons so she liked that she could get what she wanted.

#### *What were some things you did to keep your mind off of treatment?*

**Ben**- Crafts. There was this funny time I couldn't find any crafts I wanted to make so I used pipe cleaners to wrap around and decorate my glasses. All the doctors and nurses in clinic loved it and brought their glasses to me to decorate.

**Eddie**- Legos and I went to the soccer field with the team when my counts were good.

**Kyrilee**- Lots of movies.

**Billy**- Go to the playroom, just do anything.

**Eddie**- For Halloween one year, I had a basin full of candy.

**Matt**- Playing with a lot of toys.





*How spoiled were you? (This question the moms threw in at the last minute...)*

**Ben-** Not spoiled at all! (he says sarcastically). All I had to say was “After all I’ve been through?”

**Eddie-** I used the puppy dog face.

**Ben-** I asked for chicken nuggets so my dad brought me some from Burger King but they had too much pepper on them. So, my dad went back out to McDonalds to get more.

**Billy’s Mom, Kim** - Billy got shrimp and crab legs.

**Kyralee’s Mom, Resalee** - Well her father said she had cancer during her “developing years” so since everything was done for her during those 5 years she got lazy.

*What did your friends do to help you?*

**Eddie-** My class at school had a hat day. Kids in my class could donate 25cents to wear a hat. Once the principal found out about it he opened it up to the whole school as a fundraiser for Leukemia/ Lymphoma Society.

**Ben-** Most of them at school made videos for me of them telling jokes for me while I was in treatment and that made me laugh. They also videotaped a field trip I wasn’t able to attend. My friend Becca had a birthday party and raised money for me instead of getting presents.

**Eddie’s Mom, Ladonna-** Eddie had a friend that shaved his head too.

**Kyralee-** My friend brought a bag of cookie dough and we made sugar cookies all day.

**Kyralee’s Mom, Resalee-** Her friends at gymnastics also made a poster with all the girls’ handprints.

**Billy-** My school did something called Hat Day because I always wore my hat because I was bald So they all wore hats so I wouldn’t be the only one.

**Ben-** A teacher got me my 1st do rag.

**Billy’s Mom, Kim-** His school taped the first day of school and sent him mail constantly.

**Matt’s Mom, Stu-** Friends and family took care of the five other siblings so they didn’t feel left out.

**Ben’s Mom, Sue-** Yes, the worst thing for the siblings is to always be asked how is your brother/ sister?

*How do you feel now?*

**Ben-** I feel thankful that I made it through, I feel stronger. I am very thankful for the doctors for helping me. The only bad part now is I don’t get as much stuff. Lol...

**Billy-** I’m happy that I can see my friends and family again and that I’m not sick anymore. And that I don’t get woken up by the nurse checking on me in the middle of the night.

**Eddie-** I feel much better that I can actually sleep.

**Kyralee-** I feel thankful, if it wasn’t for all the doctors, I wouldn’t be here.

**Matt-** I feel thankful, now that I am better I climb trees and everything. Now I can help other kids and I raise money for playstations for hospitals.

*We have noticed that once kids get through their cancer treatments they do like to help others who are going through it. Is there any special way that you have done that?*

**Ben-** I try to help kids who are going through treatment by giving them advice and letting them know that if I did it, they can too. I try to help Cool Kids when they ask me to do something. I helped Johns Hopkins make a video about Sarcoma. We (my family) makes “finders” and angels for kids who we hear about who are in treatment. My sister, Olivia, has yard sales every year to raise money for different things, like sarcoma research.

**Kyralee’s Mom, Resalee-** When Dr. Wiley started seeing patients in the Bel Air office Kyralee was upset to find out that there was no treasure chest

for the kids to pick a prize from after the visit. She was older then so Kyralee wasn’t really thinking that she needed something from the chest but she wanted especially the younger kids to still have a prize. They have one at the peds hem/onc clinic at Sinai and it means a lot to the kids to have something to look forward to. So she asked if we could get a treasure chest for the new office. I bought the chest at Michael’s and Kyralee and a family friend, who was an art teacher, painted it. One of Kyralee’s father’s co-workers heard about what she was doing and made a request to the members of his church for items to fill it. Every time Kyralee has a check-up in the office we check to see if more things are needed for the chest.

**Eddie’s mom, Ladonna** - Eddie raised \$500.00 and donated it to John Hopkins for Pediatric Cancer Research in 2009 in memory of Graham Harrison, a friend from the hospital and Camp Sunrise. He hopes to raise \$500.00 again this year. He recycles empty ink cartridges donated by his school, a doctor’s office and the company his mother works. The idea was presented on the John Hopkins TV show from another childhood cancer survivor. Eddie thought it was a unique idea to raise money.

*Is there anything you want to add or tell the kids who are currently going through their treatments?*

**Ben** – Don’t give up hope.

**Billy’s Mom, Kim** – These kids don’t let cancer define them. They are kids, they are people, they have lives. Every day there is something good.

**Ben’s mom, Sue** – They have joy in their lives. Cancer is awful, but you have to keep your faith strong and your sense of humor intact. Make a point to laugh everyday and make the most of each situation. Find the blessing in each day because no matter how bad it gets the blessings always outweigh the bad moments.

**Eddie** – Peace out!



*Riddles...*

**Q:** What never gets any wetter, no matter how much it rains?

**A:** The sea!

**Q:** A man went outside in the pouring rain with no protection, but not a hair on his head got wet...how come?

**A:** He was bald.

**Q:** David’s father has three sons : Snap, Crackle and \_\_\_\_ ?

**A:** David

**Q:** What has a mouth but doesn’t eat, a bank with no money, a bed but doesn’t sleep, and waves but has no hands?

**A:** A River

**Q:** A cowboy rode to an inn on Friday. He stayed two nights and left on Friday. How could that be?

**A:** His horse was called Friday.

**Q:** If the red house is on the right side and if the blue house is on the left side where’s the white house?

**A:** Washington DC

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*you can achieve it;*  
If you can dream it, *you can become it.*

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Games, Trivia & More

## WINTER WORD SEARCH

S	F	G	S	J	N	G	Y	C	I	H	F	R	O	S	T	L
V	C	N	S	T	A	F	S	N	O	W	B	A	L	L	W	D
Y	Y	A	K	K	F	C	H	Y	G	W	I	N	T	E	R	S
Z	R	Z	R	W	A	I	K	K	B	U	R	T	Q	E	G	K
G	B	E	X	F	O	T	R	E	E	G	O	T	N	A	N	I
C	N	M	P	D	L	N	I	D	T	N	W	J	N	R	I	S
U	S	I	B	P	J	Y	S	N	E	M	Y	S	S	M	Z	P
B	L	T	O	W	I	O	K	K	G	R	N	K	X	U	E	T
L	E	T	M	I	C	L	A	Z	A	O	I	C	F	F	E	K
I	D	E	J	G	L	L	S	U	W	S	S	E	L	F	R	R
Z	D	N	A	P	F	S	N	B	N	N	B	B	Y	S	F	E
Z	L	S	N	W	V	A	O	W	O	R	Y	R	J	X	S	B
A	O	G	O	I	J	A	O	W	U	Y	D	N	I	W	J	M
R	C	N	F	C	R	L	M	A	E	L	C	I	C	I	K	E
D	S	I	P	D	P	A	R	D	H	L	P	V	V	E	X	C
R	N	W	J	F	N	Y	B	O	O	T	S	H	N	M	W	E
P	D	I	G	I	R	F	U	G	L	E	V	O	H	S	E	D

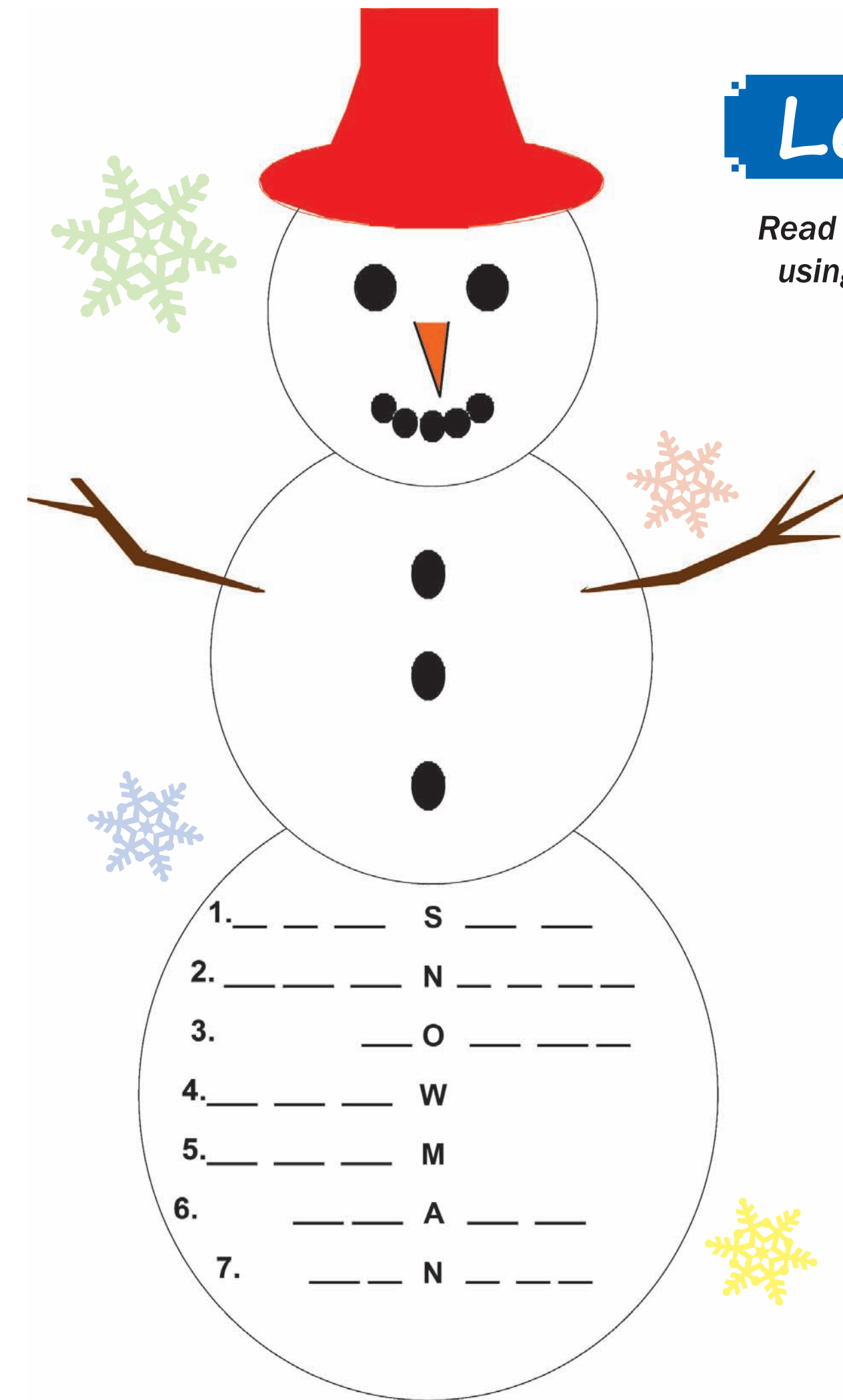
Happy  
Holidays!

blizzard	plow
boots	scarf
cold	shovel
December	skating
earmuffs	skis
February	sled
freezing	sliding
frigid	slippery
frost	snow
icicle	snowball
icy	snowboard
jacket	snowflake
January	snowman
mittens	windy
	winter

## Let It Snow

Read the clues and fill in the blanks using the words in the box below.

Snow  
Boots  
Reindeer  
Warm  
Scarf  
Frosty  
Winter



1.	— — — S — —
2.	— — — N — — —
3.	— O — — —
4.	— — — W
5.	— — — M
6.	— — — A — —
7.	— — — N — — —

1. Icy Cold
2. North Pole Animal
3. You wear them on your feet
4. It comes from the sky in winter
5. How you feel in front of a fireplace
6. Wear it around your neck to keep warm
7. A season



# That's a BIG Camera...

By TJ Root



That's a big camera," I often hear muttered by astounded passersby. I crack an awkward smile. How should I respond? They're not wrong. I'm usually using a big camera, but I can't help but feel that they are doing more than simply commenting on the size of my camera. When someone strikes up conversation about how big my camera is, most of the time the next question is one of the following: is that yours, how much zoom does that thing have, who do you shoot for, are you a professional, and occasionally, how much does that thing cost? While each question has its own answer (yes, it's mine; 300mm or 400mm or sometimes just "a lot"; my school paper; no, I'm a student; a lot), I never answer untruthfully, but I will admit that I can be a bit sarcastic at times; the answers are true, but they rarely tell the entire story. The last question is my favorite to answer. I never give out a figure because it's not important. I'm not sure what they are looking

for in my answer, but they often get an explanation: "I had lymphoma, and I actually got this lens, this camera, and this other lens (pointing to the referenced piece of gear each time) from the Make a Wish Foundation."

They usually forget about the camera, sometimes giving me a look of puzzlement or disbelief. I think my full head of hair throws them. Some make note of my use of 'had' instead of 'have,' but all ask how I am doing. I respond, "very well, thank you. I had clean scans x number of months ago" (pausing to figure out when they last were). The next question is often how long ago this was. Every time I answer I have to pause and count it out. One would imagine that I would know in an instant how long ago I finished chemotherapy, but for whatever reason I only think about it when someone asks. People almost always say how glad they are to hear

that I'm "doing better." I politely say thank you and resume photographing. I smile and move on, because this is the most I ever think about my illness. In the eyes of the unassuming questioner, I just went from potentially spoiled kid with huge camera to cancer kid. The fact that I had cancer does not define me; I do not want the label of cancer kid. At that moment I am just a photographer. I tell my story not to elicit pity or to be identified as a cancer kid. Sometimes, I am embarrassed about how nice my gear is, but most of the time I am proud and grateful that I found an intense new passion for photography through cancer.

*Editor's Note: TJ is currently 17 and a senior at a private school outside of Baltimore. He was treated at Sinai Hospital and now works at a tennis club in addition to doing some freelance work for a newspaper as well as his school paper where he is the senior photo editor.*

## Answers to the Cool Kids Games

1. FRO **S** TY
2. REI **N** DEER
3. B **O** OTS
4. SNOW **W**
5. WARM **M**
6. SC **A** RF
7. WINTER



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Share your thoughts, feelings, fears, experiences, and 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, and about you! And we need YOU to make it happen. We are looking for articles, stories, poetry, drawings, photographs, puzzles, jokes, questions...anything you would like to share.

Please include all of 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 [www.coolkidscampaign.org](http://www.coolkidscampaign.org) or email to [sharon@coolkidscampaign.org](mailto:sharon@coolkidscampaign.org)





# AGAINST the Odds

## ELRIC'S STORY

*By his mom, Kelly Childress*

**I**t was the early August of 2009 when we noticed Elric's behavior becoming increasingly worse. Elric has always been my laid back child, so temper tantrums and outbursts were not like him. We thought it was just him getting nervous about starting second grade.

Well he started school and when he got home that first day, he told me he didn't want to go back because he had fallen getting off the school bus that morning. We tried to tell him it was okay, no one would make fun of him, he had to go to school. For about a week he would have massive temper tantrums about going to school, but once there he would calm down and go about his day.

The school nurse called one day and told us that Elric's eye was "migrating" to the side and he was walking awkwardly. So off to his pediatrician we went.

His doctor took one look at him (mid-temper tantrum) and said that this wasn't the child she has been taking care of since he was a baby.

She sent us to a neurologist at Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters (CHKD). He scheduled a MRI. Of course by then we were beside ourselves with worry. The neurologist wouldn't say anything, he said he'd speak to us after the MRI results were in.

About mid-September Elric had his MRI. A week later my husband Eric and I met with the neurologist and he told us the devastating news. Elric had a tumor in the Pons section of his brain.

We didn't even know where to begin, so we met with an oncologist with CHKD on October 9th. The oncologist told us Elric had Diffused Intrinsic

Pontine Glioma (DIPG) a rare inoperable and incurable Brain Stem Glioma. He gave Elric 9 months to live.

That evening Eric and I scoured websites trying to learn something about DIPG, what we found didn't give us much hope.

We came across a protocol at St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital run by Dr. Broniscer. We contacted him and Elric was accepted into his protocol the next day.

We left our home on October 19th to head to St. Jude's. Elric underwent 6 weeks of radiation and began his protocol medicines.

He did great! He was walking, running and playing by the time we left St. Jude's on December 12th.

On Elric's 8th birthday everything quickly went downhill. He gained the weakness on his right side, so walking was not even an option at this point. His oncologist at CHKD ( Dr. Pegram) did a CAT Scan and found that Elric had major swelling of his brain and massive fluid built up. So January 17, 2010 we headed back to St. Jude for a VP Shunt surgery.

In the process we found out that what we thought was his tumor growing and pressing on the spinal nerves causing the weakness, was actually a necrotic cyst in the middle of his tumor. He had his shunt placed and a few days later we noticed his abdominal incision leaking.

His doctors did a test to find out that the leakage was spinal fluid. So back into the hospital we went, they extracted his shunt tube to his abdomen, and check the spinal fluid drainage. That went well, so they kept him over the weekend as his cyst drainage surgery was scheduled that Monday.

We finally got his shunt fixed and the cyst drained, He got through that with flying colors!

We returned to the Ronald McDonald House in Memphis where we were staying while at St. Jude's.

As we were looking at being able to head home, Elric ended up inpatient again with an Upper GI Tear, and a yeast infection growing in his abdominal incision. We spent 16 days inpatient having those taken care of.

A Wound Vac and MRI later, here it was March 2010. The MRI results stated that his cancer had spread to the tip of the left brain ventricle. He was taken off his protocol and put on a different chemo. It didn't seem to help his tumor much.

In April Elric "lost" his voice for a day, so the doctors at St. Jude did a cat scan to find out what was causing it. What they found was a small brain bleed caused by a medicine he was on for a blood clot he developed in his leg from not being able to use his right side. We stopped the medicine and they placed a filter in the vein. Elric was able to talk again the next day, but his doctors wanted to do another MRI because his "cancer spread" didn't show up on the CAT Scan.

On June 2nd we had been in Memphis for six months. The kids were getting worked up and wanting to go home, but we couldn't until we had Elric back on track. We had another MRI and a side scan to find out that the "spread" wasn't his cancer spreading, but fat cells from the high dosage of steroids he was on in January. We were elated! We only had the one tumor to deal with, and while it can take his life, we had positive results on his original protocol! The only downside was that his tumor had grown a bit causing more pressure on those nerves and therefore more weakness on his right side.

After about a month, we finally got Elric placed back on his protocol meds!

On August 2nd, almost eight months after we returned to St. Jude's, we had another MRI and the results were fantastic! His tumor was

closing in on itself from the cyst drainage, and the bits that grew were shrinking! We finally were told we could go home! Both the kids were so happy!

In September when we returned home, Elric improved daily. He had to learn to talk and walk again, and he is still working on walking. As of now, November, he's doing a lot better. We've been back to St. Jude for an eight week MRI. As of that MRI we have almost 50% shrinkage of his Tumor.

He's working hard in OT/PT and regaining his strength, he is also getting a gait trainer to help "teach" him to walk on his own again! We are very excited! He's doing well with his homebound school and loves his teacher Mrs. Whitmore. Other than that, he's working on his strength on his right side and is enjoying sleeping in his own bed again.

We know we have a long road ahead of us, and we know there are other kids that live and have lived with DIPG for years and are doing well. Eric and I live with the thought in the back of our minds that we could lose Elric, but we don't live like it! We take every day as it comes and help Elric to achieve his goals!

I myself have to say, I'm so proud of my son, he has taught me so much, and he is and will always be my hero!





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November 3, 2010

I picked up a "Cool Kids Connection" while my son was waiting for his chemotherapy at UC Davis Medical Center. Reading the articles from each parent was like reading our own. It still brings me to tears, but in sharing our story I know we are not alone. This is our story.

My son Joseph was looking forward to his 5 birthday back in August, 2008. Our family of five had gotten a 24hr. flu, only Joseph never got better. He had a fever and complained that his stomach and legs hurt. I thought he might be dehydrated after all it was a very hot summer. But crying through the night caused my husband to think maybe he had something else. We took him to the ER one late night wanting answers. After many tests, they said he was constipated, dehydrated, and anemic. We were told to see our doctor the following week, but each night he seemed to get worse. We took him to yet another medical clinic for a second opinion. They also could not find anything obvious.

Come Monday morning our doctor's office staff said they had the results from the ER and didn't seem too concerned, but sent us to get yet another blood draw. I promised my three kids ice cream afterwards and before we had even got home, I had a message from my doctor saying that I needed to come back to the hospital for a blood transfusion. My son's blood counts were dropping quickly.

So back to the hospital we went waiting for a blood transfusion. Our doctor met us there and before little Joe could get his blood transfusion, he said we would need to go to another hospital and do one further test because Joseph may have leukemia. By now it was 5pm and we would be driving 2 hours away and planning to stay overnight.

Within 48 hours, Joseph's leukemia was confirmed. He had a blood transfusion and was on the schedule for a broviac and chemotherapy treatment the next morning at 8am! I was in shock and denial. I thought we were just there for a test! Most parents can related that their whole world stops as they wonder and wait what will happen next. Trying to figure out his medication schedule and new attitudes and emotions from all three kids including myself, was our new normal.

Today we have been in treatment for 2 years and have about a year and a half to go. We've learned how to home school and rely on our friends and neighbors for help. The best part of our journey, is knowing that each day is God's gift of life to our family.

Thank you for hearing our story,  
The Chester Family



## Doctor, Doctor Jokes

Doctor, Doctor I think I need glasses.  
You certainly do Sir, this is a fish and chip shop!

Doctor, Doctor my son has swallowed my pen,  
what should I do?  
Use a pencil 'till I get there.

Doctor, Doctor I think I'm a bell.  
Take these and if it doesn't help give me a ring!

Doctor, Doctor I've got wind! Can you give me something?  
Yes - here's a kite!

Doctor, Doctor, how do I stop my nose from running?  
Stick your foot out and trip it up!

Doctor, Doctor I think I'm a moth.  
So why did you come around then?  
Well, I saw this light at the window...!

Doctor, Doctor I keep getting pains in the eye  
when I drink coffee.  
Have you tried taking the spoon out?

Doctor, Doctor I feel like a pack of cards.  
I'll deal with you later.

Doctor, Doctor will this ointment clear up my spots?  
I never make rash promises!

Doctor, Doctor my sister here keeps thinking she's invisible!  
What sister?

Doctor, Doctor I'm on a diet and it's making me irritable. Yesterday I bit someone's ear off.  
Oh dear, that's a lot of calories!

Doctor, Doctor Can I have second opinion?  
Of course, come back tomorrow!

Doctor, Doctor you have to help me out!  
Certainly, which way did you come in?

Doctor, Doctor I keep thinking I'm invisible.  
Who said that?

Without leaps of .....  
**imagination or dreaming,**  
we lose the  
**excitement of possibilities.**

**Dreaming,** after all, is a form of planning.

..... - Gloria Steinem

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# Cool Kids AND Cool Caregivers

*The family and friends of Derek Lloyd might call him “grumpy boy” but they know he sure is one smart cookie! Who else would ask for a boat to get off a deserted island?*

*Another thing that Derek’s entourage can attest to: he is an enthusiastic football fan and admires the skill of Brett Favre.*

*Cammie Woodward, on the other hand, adores the talent that former football player Jerry Rice displayed. This young mother has a lot on her plate besides football though. She loves spending time with her family outdoors and all that the Fall season has to offer. Take a few minutes to get to know these cool cats!*

by: Molly Lauryssens

Derek Lloyd



*What is your name?* Derek Lloyd  
*Where do you live?* Abingdon, MD  
*What grade are you in?* Second  
*How old are you?* 7  
*What is your favorite subject in school?* Math  
*If you were going to write a book what would it be about?* Frogs & parrots.  
*What is your favorite food?* Salt & vinegar chips and crab legs.  
*Do you have a BFF?* Yes, Jarrett!  
*Who is your favorite celebrity (sport or entertainer)?* Brett Favre!!!!!!!!!!!!  
*What types of things do you like to do for exercise?* Running, ride my bike & play football with my brothers.  
*If you were the President of Whoville what would be your first act as the ruler?* Say kids get whatever they want.  
*Do you like dogs, cats, earthworms, birds?* Yes, and hermit crabs- I have one, and a dog and cat too!  
*What is your favorite cereal?* Cinnamon toast crunch  
*If you could be anything in the world, what would it be when you grow up and why?* A football player, cuz I love football!  
*What is your favorite movie?* Despicable Me  
*Favorite television show?* Scooby Doo  
*What is your favorite video game to play?* Madden 11  
*What is your favorite sport?* Football  
*What kind of music do you listen to?* All of it.  
*Do you have any brothers or sisters, if so- what are their names?* Three brothers...Damon (12), Darius (9) & Nealen (4)  
*What is your favorite fruit or vegetable?* Oranges  
*If you were stranded on a deserted island, what three things would you like to have?* A house, a dog & a boat to get off of it.  
*What are you most grateful for? You can name more than one thing...* My Mommy & Dad the mostest... all my family too- my brothers, my Mom-mom, my Mom-mom’s blue car & my Aunt Lisa and John. Plus I can go to school with my friends again!!!  
*What is your favorite book?* Captain Underpants  
*If you were one of the seven dwarfs, which one would you be? Why?* Grumpy, cuz he’s most like me.  
*If you could meet and interview one famous person, who would it be? And what is the first question you’d ask?* Brett Favre, I want to know is it fun being a QB?

Cammie Woodward



*What is your name?* Cammie Woodward  
*Where do you live?* I live in Folsom, California which is a suburb of Sacramento- the state capital.  
*What is your title?* I am a certified child life specialist in the pediatric specialty clinic at Kaiser Roseville Medical Center.  
*What do you do?* I help children (ages 0-21) cope with their diagnosis and understand it in an age-appropriate way through play, preparation, education and self-expression activities. I also provide support to their families as well. I accompany patients during procedures, creating a child-friendly environment, and use distraction and guided imagery techniques to help them cope during those procedures. I also do activities to help make sure the kids are continuing to grow and develop normally, despite their illnesses and medical challenges. Lastly, I help to educate caregivers and the general public about the needs of children under these types of stress.  
*What is your favorite thing about your job?* I love when I’m able to help calm down a child who is upset. This helps not only the child, but their parents as well. It also makes it easier for the nurses and doctors to do what they need to do when the patients are calm and able to cooperate.  
*Least favorite thing about your job?* The hardest part of my job is dealing with patients whose treatment has failed. I provide end of life support to those patients and their families, and while it’s very rewarding, it’s also very emotionally taxing.  
*What time does your normal day start?* Sometimes very early because I have a young baby, but usually I’m up around 5:30 a.m. to feed the baby and then start getting myself ready for work.  
*What is your favorite sport to watch?* Ice skating  
*To play?* Skiing and snowboarding. I’m not that good, but I sure enjoy them!  
*Do you have children of your own?* Yes, I have two boys. Zachary just turned 3, and Mason is 6-months old.  
*What do you like to do for fun?* I love spending time with my family, and we love doing outdoor activities together, such as camping, hiking, and boating. I love to travel and explore new places. Photography is a passion of mine, so I always try to get great pictures wherever we go! I also love to scrapbook, but being a busy Mom, I haven’t found time to do that in a very long time.  
*What is your favorite movie?* There’s so many I love, but one of my long-time favorites is Grease.  
*What is your favorite book?* Memoirs of a Geisha.  
*What was your favorite subject growing up?* Besides recess I loved English and writing the best.  
*Favorite cereal?* Lucky Charms  
*Favorite dessert?* Crème Brule  
*Favorite kind of food?* I love steak and potatoes! Hamburgers and sweet potato fries are my next favorite meal.  
*Favorite board game?* Blokus, and I’ve taught it to our staff and patients, so we have lots of great games going sometimes!  
*Favorite card game?* I’ve always enjoyed Uno.  
*What is your favorite food during the Thanksgiving celebration?* I love it all, but I think that the candied yams have to be my favorite.  
*Cats or dogs?* Definitely dogs--I’m allergic to cats.  
*Favorite celebrity?* Brad Pitt.  
*Favorite season?* They all have their pros and cons, but I think I like fall the best. I love leaves changing colors and the cooler weather. I’ve always enjoyed going to pumpkin patches, apples festivals, and all of the fall activities.  
*If you could have dinner with one person, dead or alive, who would it be and why?* I think I’d love to have dinner with Jerry Rice. I met him before through my previous job, and he was unusually nice. He’s an amazing athlete, but also a wonderful person. I’d love to get to know him better.  
*What is on your iPod? If you don’t have one, what CD’s are in your car right now?* I have a HUGE variety of music on my iPod: children’s music for my kids, contemporary Christian (Steven Curtis Chapman and Lincoln Brewster), some country (Carrie Underwood and Rascal Flatts), 80s music, and lots of alternative music (Dave Mathews Band, Five for Fighting, Counting Crows) and lots of random artists like Michael Jackson, James Taylor, the Beatles, Madonna, Jason Mraz, Green Day, Bon Jovi, Maroon 5 and Ricky Martin! I love music, but my tastes vary all the time based upon my moods.

*Interested in being profiled, or know someone who should be, in one of the upcoming editions of the Cool Kids Connection? Please contact Sharon Perfetti at [sharon@coolkidscampaign.org](mailto:sharon@coolkidscampaign.org)*



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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.

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