



# Together We Can!



Volume 2, No. 1  
May 2024

– Helping Families Fighting Childhood Cancer –

## Welcome!

This is our fifth UP Lions Serve (UPLS) Childhood Cancer Newsletter for “Yooper” families, our supporters and partners, and anyone who has an interest in childhood cancer. We are so grateful for all of you. Thank you all for your time, your donations and the resources that you have shared. We hope this newsletter will continue to uplift, encourage and inform. *Together We Can* build a community of support for our families that are battling childhood cancer.

## Mission

Our mission is to serve children and families from the Upper Peninsula who are battling childhood cancer. We believe that when a child is sick, the entire family is affected. Our support focuses on the individual along with the entire family.

The Childhood Cancer program provides grants to families to minimize the financial hardship that is directly attributable to their child’s diagnosis. This includes needs for travel, medical and household bills.

We rely solely on donations from private benefactors, sponsors, Lions Clubs and other community organizations, foundations and fundraisers. Every dollar earned goes directly to the families and to the programs that serve them.

# Tour Da Yoop, Eh 2024

## A Rider Invitation

By Zack Smith

Hello, I am Zack Smith. I left the Upper Peninsula in 1985 because of my Air Force career, and I've been residing in Northwest Florida for the past 31 years. In 2020, I completed the Tour Da Yoop, EH, a 1,200-mile, ten-day "bicycling" adventure through and around the breathtaking Upper Peninsula. I enjoyed the experience so much that I chose to repeat it. In 2021, Tour Da



Zack and Connie Smith with Miles (far left) and his brother Heath.

Yoop, Eh teamed with UP Lions Serve to raise awareness and money for UP families dealing with childhood cancer in their families. As I learned more about the UP Lions Serve program, I was captivated and thought it was a

terrific way to give back to the UP, so this year will be my fourth adventure around the UP and third year "all in" to assist the UP Lions Serve. The Upper Peninsula is fifth in the country (per capita) for childhood cancer diagnoses, a fact that many people are unaware of. UP families confront enormous obstacles when a child falls ill since they have to travel up to 800 miles round trip for medical attention. To alleviate the financial load on these U.P. households, Tour Da Yoop, Eh has raised over \$165,000 in the last three years. In an effort to generate funds and awareness for U.P. families dealing

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with childhood cancer, Tour Da Yoop, Eh and Upper Peninsula Lions/Childhood Cancer will be collaborating for the fourth year in 2024.

Each year, my wife Connie and I look forward to meeting and interacting with the families. We love to meet new families and learn about their children, along with seeing ones we previously met, to get updates on their treatment and progress. We are always excited when we get the miracu-

lous news that someone gets to "ring the bell" because they beat cancer and we celebrate, while others we keep in prayer for their turn to "ring the bell". Each meeting is always incredible with humbling interactions. We are amazed at the fortitude and resilience these families show. I have so many amazing stories that I bring home to share with friends and families about our new "friends". I ride with a wooden cross from Jerusalem, my late father's necklace, and his ring. On all my training rides, I always say a prayer for Dad and with a few additional intentions, one of which is always for the families in the Upper Peninsula who are suffering with a child who has cancer.

Connie and I would love to see and hear from families we've previously met, as well as new families who would like to meet us and share their journey/story. Please come out and meet us at the end of the day at Host Towns! Alternatively, you may cheer us on at hydration stations along the road, as we pass through or near your town! Please contact Chris Smith (text 313-682-8900, email lionchris906pcc@outlook.com) for more information on where you and your family could best meet the riders!



Zack Smith lets Miles try out his bicycle.

# You are invited!

By Lion Chris Smith

Meet us at the End of the Day in Host Towns! Or at Hydration Stations along the way or cheer us on if we are passing through your town! Here are a few events so mark these locations and dates! We need you!

**DAY 1** Friday, July 26th

## Manistique to Escanaba

- End of Day at the Escanaba Docks! Riders arrive at the docks after riding over 100 miles from Manistique and jump into Lake Michigan! It is also Food Truck Fridays at the Docks from 4-8PM with some trucks opening early. Be there at 3PM ET to join in the FUN! Please RSVP

**DAY 2** Saturday, July 27th

## Escanaba to Iron Mountain

- Kleinke Park Hydration Station
- End of Day at Comfort Inn in Iron Mountain – *More information to come*

**DAY 3** Sunday, July 28th

## Iron Mountain to Ironwood

- End of the Day at the Stormy Kromer Headquarters in Ironwood – *More information to come*

**DAY 4** Monday, July 29th

## Ironwood to Houghton

- End of Day Pizza Party Super 8 Houghton 1200 East Lakeshore Dr 49931 6-8PM ET Join us on the Back Deck and have some Pizza! Please RSVP

**DAY 5** Tuesday, July 30th

## Copper Harbor Loop

**DAY 6** Wednesday, July 31st

## Houghton to Marquette

- End of Day 906 Adventure Team Host 4-6PM ET Located at 955 N Lakeshore Blvd. Marquette 49855. We will have a tent set up at the entrance. Meet the riders and enjoy a party with us and healthy snacks! Please RSVP . *\*Made possible by a grant from Flagstar Bank\**

**DAY 7** Thursday, August 1st

## Marquette to Grand Marais

**DAY 8** Friday, August 2nd

## Grand Marais to Sault Ste. Marie

**DAY 9** Saturday, August 3rd

## Sault Ste. Marie to St. Ignace

- Plaid Party – *More information to come*

**DAY 10** Sunday, August 4th

## St. Ignace to Manistique

- End of Day Finish Party hosted by Flatiron Brewing located 375 Traders Point Dr Stop #4 Manistique 49854

[tourdayoopeh.com/rides/tour-da-yoop-eh-annual-event](http://tourdayoopeh.com/rides/tour-da-yoop-eh-annual-event)

RSVP Contact: Lion Chris Smith

Text: 313-682-8900

Email: lionchris906pcc@outlook.com

## WE WANT TO HELP YOU!

Regardless of the resources that you have available, we know that dealing with cancer stretches those resources – even if you are struggling for the holidays. We have funds to help with a variety of needs.



For information on how to get help, visit:

<https://uplionsserve.org/childhood-cancer>

Email: lionchris906pcc@outlook.com

Text or Call Chris Smith: 313-682-8900

# WALK RUN ROAR

GWINN LIONS CLUB



5K RUN WALK 2024  
GWINN FUN DAZE

## JUNE 22, 2024 WALK, RUN, ROAR 5K AT GWINN FUN DAZE

### Gwinn Fun Daze 2024

Come and join us for the 7th annual "Walk, Run, Roar 5K" to kick off Gwinn Fun Daze 2024. All proceeds from this race will go to **Childhood Cancer**. After the race enjoy the antique car, truck, tractor, and chainsaw show. There will also be crafts, food, games, duck race, soccer camp, corn hole tournament and live music in Nordeen Park. So come to Gwinn for a 5k and a day of fun! Race participants get a \$3 dollar coupon to use at food vendor in the park.

If you are interested in being a race sponsor or volunteering please contact us!



We Serve



### Race Check-In, Start and Finish Location

Gilbert Elementary School  
250 W Iron St  
Gwinn, MI 49841

Pre-Register online:

<https://runsignup.com/Race/MI/Gwinn/WalkRunRoar>

### Schedule

7:30am-Check-in Open

8:45am-Race Line Up

9am-Race Starts!

Results and prizes post  
race

### Registration

\$25 By June 21st

\$30 Day of Race

### GWINN LIONS CLUB

For more information about  
Gwinn Fun Daze go to:

[gwinnlionsclub.org](http://gwinnlionsclub.org)

Or email us at:

[gwinnlionsclub@gmail.com](mailto:gwinnlionsclub@gmail.com)

# An open letter to the man who saved our son's life



Dear Bone Marrow Donor,

Though it's been a while since our story first began – Our family has received the wonderful "gift" that you so unselfishly gave for our son.

This gift is like NOTHING we have EVER received in this lifetime... & NOTHING that we'll ever receive in the future.

We KNOW that it took a thoughtful, caring and incredibly loving person to consider giving a gift like this one, at ALL.



There are not proper words to thank you.

Our son Camden was only 6 TINY weeks old when his father & I learned that he had "zero chance of survival, WITHOUT a successful bone marrow transplant. – Our lives were completely flipped upside-down. We scrambled for answers & a way to save him from a fate that NO infant/child should EVER have to face.

A couple short weeks later – We would learn that Camden had a match on the "Be The Match" bone marrow registry! Shortly thereafter, we would start the process of preparing Camden for his BMT. ❤️ 🙏

We would learn that "our Saving Grace" was YOU! – An impossibly KIND young man from the United States. We were told VERY little about you, as far as details.... Mostly, just that "Camden's donor" was in excellent health & that he was roughly a "30 year old man from America."

Similar to the small amount of information WE were given

on him.... the donor ALSO receives VERY "little information" on the patient they will hopefully be "saving."

This young man would learn he had matched with a (then) 2-month old, little boy from the US who was suffering from HLH. – He was told that "HLH is a vicious-condition, most-similar to leukemia." ...& that this sweet, little boy would NOT survive WITHOUT this bone marrow transplant. And that his HLH would inevitably "claim his life" without a successful outcome.

The medical professionals explained that the little boy's "condition" was rapidly declining, & his treatment would need to begin SOON. 🙏

With little to NO hesitation... our donor,

a BRAVE young-soul IMMEDIATELY jumped into action & began preparing himself to make the ULTIMATE sacrifice for our family! – Donating bone marrow to a little boy he KNEW he had NEVER met! ...& may NEVER actually "meet" in the future!!

This young man gave my family the anonymous "Gift of Life."

We can NEVER properly thank you for this amazing gift that you have bestowed upon my family!!!! – We can only express our DEEPEST gratitude. and ALWAYS keep you and your family in our thoughts and prayers!

While we may not "know" you.... We DO know things about you, that MOST around

you, will NEVER see! – We understand the kind of "light & love" that lives inside of you.

You have truly become a part of our FAMILY... FOREVER!! – We have cried tears for you... & we will always, ALWAYS "remember YOU," & the beautiful gift that you've blessed our son, & our family with. 🙏 ❤️

& in our "remembering," we will be called to ALWAYS act to our highest good. We have known the BEST that a human

can be - Because YOU have modeled it for us!!!

We will live in gratitude for your absolute and inconceivable generosity, for the REST of our lives. – Camden is now a happy & HEALTHY 4 year old little boy... & we owe that ALL to you, sir! 🙏

With our deepest gratitude,

The Family of Camden K ❤️ 🎗️



Above: Camden and fellow warrior Ariya

Left: Camden

# Be the match... Please!

By Lion Ann Wood

Nearly 10,000 children in the United States under the age of 15 will be diagnosed with cancer in 2024. Because of major treatment advances in recent decades, 85% of children with cancer now survive 5 years or more. The most common types of cancers among kids are leukemia, brain cancer, lymphoma, and neuroblastoma.

Children with blood cancers like leukemia and lymphoma, or other life-threatening diseases, may be treated and sometimes cured with a blood stem cell donation. To receive this, a genetic match must be found using lists from all possible donors. From these lists, a matching can be found and then the donor's healthy stem cells can be collected and used to replace a patient's sick cells—and their entire immune system.

Even with a registry of millions, many patients cannot find a match. More donors will increase the chances of finding these genetic matches.

The NMDP—the National Blood Marrow Donation Program—is a nonprofit that handles the matching process. First, eligibility is determined. Donors must be between 18 and 40 and complete a short health history.

Eligible donors will receive a swab kit in the mail, then can collect their own cheek swab and return the swab in a prepaid envelope.

Then the donor waits until a potential match is needed. When a match is found, the donor is notified and must promptly go to where the donation will be made.

What happens when someone donates? It depends—there are two types of donations. About 90% of donations are peripheral blood stem cell (PBSC) donations, which is like donating plasma. In the days leading up to one of these donations the donor will be given injections of filgrastim, a medication that increases the number of blood-forming cells in the bloodstream.

During donation, the donor's blood goes through a needle on one arm and is passed through a machine that separates out the blood-forming cells. The remaining blood is returned through the other arm. Donors are awake and able to play cards or read during the donation.

The other donation type is a marrow donation. Marrow donations make up about 10% of total donations. Marrow

donation is a surgical procedure where doctors use needles to withdraw liquid marrow (where the body's blood-forming cells are made) from the back of the donor's pelvic bone. Donors are given anesthesia and should not feel any pain while donating.

There is a recovery period for either type of donation. Donors can usually go back to work, school and most other activities within 1-7 days. Blood stem cells return to normal levels within a few weeks. It's important to note recovery times vary depending on the individual and the type of donation.

The median time to full recovery:

- 7 days for PBSC donation
- 20 days for marrow donation

What about the cost? The NMDP covers 100% of the cost, including the treatment as well as all personal and professional expenses, such as travel, lost wages, child or pet care.

Are you considering whether to donate? Find out more, then begin the process at [bethematch.org/support-the-cause/donate-blood-stem-cells/donation-process/](http://bethematch.org/support-the-cause/donate-blood-stem-cells/donation-process/)

## Book Corner

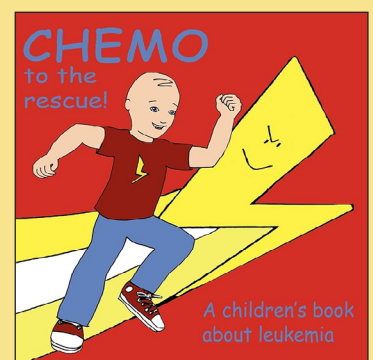
### *Chemo to the Rescue: A Children's Book About Leukemia*

By Mary Brent and Caitlin Knuttson | Grade level: 1-2 | Goodreads Rating: ★★★★★

"When my daughter, Caitlin, was diagnosed with leukemia, she was five years old. Our life changed dramatically, and it was hard to answer the questions she had about her illness and explain why she must go through chemotherapy for such a long time. At one point she began to rebel against the treatment, not understanding that the medicine that was making her feel bad was actually saving her life.

Creating this book with Caitlin helped her to come to terms with her illness and accept the treatment. It gave her the power she needed to fight and be strong during the difficult

times. She is now eight years old and fully recovered. She looks back on this time as challenging, yet with pride. We hope that our book will encourage other children in the same way by providing a positive outlook to chemotherapy and hospital life. To view our book and read our story please go to our website at: [www.chemo-to-the-rescue.com](http://www.chemo-to-the-rescue.com)."



—Abebooks.com

Learn more and stay up-to-date!

**Lion Christine Smith**

Engadine-Naubinway

Lions Club

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**SCAN THE QR CODE OR VISIT  
UPLIONSERVE.ORG/CHILDHOODCANCER**



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SUPPORTING KIDS WITH CANCER

@ UP FAMILIES FOR A CURE



**WE'RE DIGITAL!**

You can now see our newsletters  
– including past issues – online at  
[uplionsserve.org/childhood-cancer/newsletter](http://uplionsserve.org/childhood-cancer/newsletter)

Is someone close to you  
battling Childhood Cancer?

We are inviting you to participate in "Kids Corner", a space where every child going through cancer or remission, their siblings, another child family member, a friend or a classmate can share a thought, a short story, quote, or poem. Or draw a picture about their experiences with cancer or just write or draw about something they love. They can talk about a favorite nurse or doctor, something that makes them happy or sad, or makes them feel strong. We invite kids to contribute any media they choose.

Please send any contributions to:  
UP Lions Serve  
Childhood Cancer  
PO Box 107  
Engadine, MI 49827

*Special Thanks to*

*Lions Childhood Cancer Committee Members*

Lion Christine Smith, Engadine-Naubinway Lions & Childhood Cancer Chairman

Lion Debra Petkus-Perry, St Ignace Lions

Lion Deb Kleinbrook, Engadine-Naubinway Lions

Lion Keith Smith, Engadine-Naubinway Lions

Lion Carol Henriksen, Vulcan-Norway-Loretto Lions

Lion Ron Henriksen, Vulcan-Norway-Loretto Lions

Lion Gretchen Preston, Marquette Lions

Lion Syd Faassen, Keweenaw Lions



**U.P. Lions Serve  
Childhood Cancer**

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