

# Montana Hope Project



Sponsored by the Association of Montana Highway Patrolmen

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Peace  
Hope  
Joy

## Hope Project recipient's art part of 2002 Holiday Collection

**Starlight Tree**, (pictured left) by Chezrae He Does It of Lodge Grass is featured in the Give Kids The World 2002 Holiday Collection. The message contained in the 13-year-old's card is *Peace-Hope-Joy*. The package of 15 5x7 cards includes envelopes and sells for \$12.

As a member of the Crow Indian tribe, Chezrae lives on a reservation near Lodge Grass. During her family's "wish trip" journey to DisneyWorld and Give Kids The World, she participated in the Christmas Painting Contest commenting, "Oh, I don't know how to paint, but I'll give it a try." Upon completing this painting of the evergreen tree, she was surprised by how easy it came together. "Okay, so maybe I can paint," she said.

Give Kids The World is a non-profit

resort that creates magical memories for children who travel to DisneyWorld courtesy of the Montana Hope Project. Linda Douglass of The Montana Hope Project coordinates the transportation to Orlando, while Give Kids The World provides accommodations at its whimsical resort, attraction tickets and meals for a week-long fantasy vacation.

### To Order ...

*If you would like to order Chezrae's cards and support Give Kids The World, you may visit their website at [www.gktw.org](http://www.gktw.org) or call 1-800-998-5437. Please refer to item number 20226*

## Anaconda gal Bahama bound

Story by Kathie Miller  
of The Anaconda Leader Reporter

Twelve-year-old Christen Lane is looking forward to December but not because of Christmas - she's looking forward to spending the first week of December on a Disney Cruise ship touring the Bahamas.

The Montana Hope Project recently fulfilled the seventh-grader's wish to take her family on a seven-day cruise.

When presented with a check for \$1,000 just for spending money on her adventure she said, "Wow - this is all for me? I'm going to buy at least one nice outfit for the trip."

Christen's mother, Shawnee Kieser, said she was grateful the Montana Hope Project decided to grant her daughter's wish.

"The past year has been very hectic and it will be a nice getaway for the whole family," Shawnee said.

Earlier this year Christen was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer, squamous cell carcinoma, that invaded her jawbone and bone marrow. Shawnee said the doctors told her there are only nine other children in the world with the same type of cancer.

In April, Christen underwent a 10-hour surgery in which her left jawbone

was removed and a section of bone from her leg was grafted in its place.

Christen's stepfather, Frank Kieser, said the doctors told them the surgery was a success and they were able to remove all of the cancerous cells.

"Christen didn't have to go through radiation or chemotherapy. She goes for regular checkups and they run blood tests—so far everything has come out good," Frank said.

He said Christen still has some pain in her leg where the bone section was removed but otherwise has recovered well.

"We were very lucky," Frank said.

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## From the President's desk.....



**Matt Vanek of was recently granted his wish for a laptop computer system. The laptop includes a writeable CD drive and DVD player. Shown here, left to right, are Fergus County D.A.R.E Officer, Deputy Troy Eades, Montana Highway Sgt. Barbara Lobdell, Patrolman Scott Fox and Hope Project President and Montana Highway Patrolman, Kelly Mantooth. The handsome guy with the big grin is Matt.**

I was outsmarted by a kid! A teenager at that.

We were delivering a computer system to Travis Butler in Bozeman this October and I was explaining the warranty information to him. As part of the system, Travis was given a printer/fax/scanner/copier, all-in-one unit. I was explaining to Travis that they could go to Staples to fax the warranty paperwork in order for the warranty to be registered. Travis then looked at me and said, "Well if this is a fax machine, couldn't we just fax it in from here?" Yep, outsmarted by a kid and such a simple solution.

The reunion this year at Izaak Walton Inn was a record maker. We had a record number of recipients attend this year and we had a lot of wet weather. Saturday morning started with us finding out that all the Jammer buses were grounded. All around us there was record snowfall, we just had rain all day at Essex. Needless to say we didn't leave the lodge this year

for any activities. Thanks to all the helpers that scrambled around to set up lunch and activities for the kids. Many families said they had a wonderful time and it was one of the best reunions.

By the end of 2002, the Montana Hope Project will have granted 19 wishes. Not a record yet, since in 1992 the Hope Project granted 19 that year also. The average cost of a wish in 2002 is currently \$5,100.00. As the number of wishes continues to grow each year, unfortunately so does the cost of each wish.

This year, even with the economic downturn along with Montana's dismal budget shortfall, our donations are just slightly down from last. The Montana Hope Project was not able to invest any contributions into the endowment fund (savings), but we are able to fund every wish without withdrawing any money from this fund - thanks mainly to aggressive volunteers with their fund-raising and some corporate contributions.

We are currently working on a yearly list of donors to be published annually in our newsletter. The Montana Hope Project also has options on planned giving. Please contact me or ask your local Montana Highway Patrolman or one of our volunteers to learn more or to contribute. We continue to rely on your contributions to support the Montana Hope Project.

Plain and simple, I cannot thank enough those of you who donate, help and volunteer to support the Montana Hope Project. Not only are we making wishes come true for Montana kids, but I see a lasting impact on those who are able to be involved in presenting and participating in a wish.



### **MONTANA HOPE PROJECT**

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# In memoriam

## Morgan Marie Wyrick

January 23, 1993-June 12, 2002



Morgan Marie Wyrick of Baker passed away June 12, 2002, at The Children's Hospital in Denver due to complications from leukemia. Morgan was born Jan. 23, 1993 in Baker to Bill and Debbie Wyrick. She had a sister Kalli, 12 years old and a brother Duncan, 7 years old.

Morgan was in the third grade at Lincoln Elementary School in Baker. She enjoyed going to school and playing with all her friends. That was one of the things she missed most while hospitalized in Denver. Morgan enjoyed ice skating, sledding, shooting baskets, and riding 4-wheelers with her family. Morgan trea-

sured special times with her sister Kalli and her special friend Marni.

While in the hospital Morgan spent many happy hours playing cards and games, doing crafts and homework or going to the play room. She spent a lot of quality time with her Aunt Gene watching movies or talking and teaching her new cards games. The very special moments there with Kalli playing games, making bead bracelets or when Kalli would read to Morgan or maybe just lay in bed with her. Morgan took special efforts to get to know each one of her nurses (in Denver and Miles City). "Ms. Morgan" to them, she always had a smile and a twinkle in her eye

when she saw them.

Her family consists of her parents Bill and Debbie Wyrick; one sister Kalli Wyrick; one brother Duncan Wyrick; grandparents Clifton and Kay Varner of Baker, Ruth and Jon Gates of Florence, Dale and Juanita Wyrick of Helena; aunt Gene Wyrick and special friend Gina Jones of Denver; Shawna and Chad Smith of Cody, WY, Mikell Potter of Florence; Uncle Mel Varner and special friend Cassie Nielsen of Baker; special great-uncle Bill Moline of Billings; cousins Logan and Laine Smith, Mikenzi Potter; Great-grandmother Mildred Moline of Baker; and a very special friend Marni Wade.

A prayer service was held Monday, June 17, in the American Lutheran Church in Baker.

Funeral services were held Tuesday, June 18, in the American Lutheran Church with Pastor Peggy Paugh Leuzinger officiating.

Interment was in the Bonnievale Cemetery in Baker.

## Leon Allen Feddes

April 6, 1945 - July 31, 2002

The recipient children, their families and staff of the Montana Hope Project would like to acknowledge the passing of one of our long-time supporters. Leon Feddes left this earth July 31, 2002, after a tragic tractor accident at his home in Townsend.

Leon will always be remembered by his wife Dee as her best friend and golfing partner. He always had time for everyone and did his very best to accommodate all their needs, no matter what they were. He was a quiet man, but we all know that "still waters run deep."

We will never forget his contagious laugh. His mom always said that she could tell when Leon was laughing because it sounded like a Briggs & Stratton engine, and that laugh never changed. Leon was a strong Christian man and a devoted husband to Dee. Their life together was filled with love and dedication to each other. In their hearts there was truly "No Place Like Home."

## Upcoming events 2003

<b>February 23</b>	<b>Bowl For Hope; Copper City Bowling Alley, Anaconda</b>
<b>April</b>	<b>Care Bear logo sale; all Montana Thriftway grocery stores and Sutey Oil gas stations</b>
<b>June 6,7,8</b>	<b>Annual Hope Project Reunion; Izaak Walton Inn, Essex</b>
<b>June 28</b>	<b>Millenium Car Show; downtown Helena</b>
<b>July 26</b>	<b>Ride For Hope 500; converge on Red Lodge</b>
<b>August 24</b>	<b>Walk/Run For Hope; Washoe Park, Anaconda</b>
<b>September 13</b>	<b>Dinner and silent auction, The Perfect Place, Billings</b>
<b>November</b>	<b>Care Bear logo sale; all Montana Thriftway grocery stores and Sutey Oil gas stations</b>

### Kalispell area golfers raise \$5,700

Story by Blaise Wingert  
Kalispell Area Coordinator

The second annual Kalispell Charity Golf Scramble was held September 7, 2002 at Buffalo Hills Golf Course in Kalispell.

The highlight of this year's tournament was the involvement of artist Jeff Flemming. Jeff is known for his bear carvings, lovingly called Bearfoots. This year Jeff donated 12 of his sculptures to the top three teams of the tourna-

ment. Thank you Jeff.

Many thanks go out to Glacier Bank of Kalispell; Anytime Towing; Pierce Manufacturing and Flathead Electric for sponsoring hole prizes and other local businesses who supported our tournament with their generous donations. A huge thank you to Larry Wolford, Polson; Highway Patrol Officers Roger Dundas and Bruce Broden.

Thank you to everyone for their participation and ideas. We hope to see you all again next year.

# Kids coping with cancer

## Three-year-old cancer patient teaches lessons on life

Story by Peggy O'Neill  
of The Helena Independent Record

A pair of tiny black cowboy boots lies haphazardly next to a chemotherapy chair at St. Peter's Hospital's cancer treatment center. The voice of their owner — 3-year-old BrieAna Miller — can be heard singing playfully behind a closed exam-room door.

In one corner of the treatment room, two women chat happily about their grandchildren while chemo drips into their fragile veins. In another corner, a woman, also of a grandmotherly age, watches the "Price Is Right" on a TV that's attached to her chair.

The exam room door opens and out runs BrieAna, her blond curls bouncing and her face beaming from childish curiosity and innocence. She settles into the treatment chair as the nurse hooks her chemo port to the cell-killing I.V. drip. The words cancer and kids shouldn't have to be used in the same sentence. But for "the princess of the cancer center," as the nurses sometimes call her, the disease has been a constant companion for nearly a third of her life.

BrieAna was diagnosed with lymphoblastic lymphoma a little over a year ago. And while she may not be able to pronounce it, she can say that it's an "icky, icky sickness."

Ask her what's bad about cancer and she'll say, "Pokes" — a succinct way to say the pain from the needles used to administer the medication she needs.

But while the scene of a small child being swallowed in a cancer treatment chair in the middle of a room that was probably decorated without a child's taste in mind seems hard to swallow, it doesn't bother BrieAna. Besides, there's always the bowl of Tootsie Pops.

In between a discussion of the caterpillars she has at home that are in chrysa-



Photo by Leanne Smith

**BrieAna Miller and her mother, Connie, share a moment with a member of the U.S. Navy Blue Angels Flight Demonstration Squadron this summer in Helena.**

lis stage, the episode of "Blues Clues" playing on her TV and experiments of sticking out her tongue, BrieAna downs three Tootsie Pops, the I.V. dripping into her veins the entire time. The only distasteful thing on this particular day could be the anti-nausea medicine she must take. As the nurse approaches with it, BrieAna turns up her nose and says, "Ooh, ooh and double ooh." But once it's in her mouth, BrieAna's face relaxes into a smile from the bubblegum flavor.

BrieAna's initiation into the world of pokes, chemo ports and hair loss began shortly after an innocuous game of swimming-pool tag last summer at Chico Hot Springs.

"I grabbed her on the thigh and felt a lump about the size of a walnut," said BrieAna's mom, Connie.

The thought of cancer wasn't immediate but it wasn't impossible either, Connie said. Once they were back in Helena, doctors examined BrieAna and thought

the lump might be just a cyst, but further tests were required. BrieAna was scheduled for a biopsy.

By the time the biopsy was performed, pea-sized lumps had formed in her other leg and in one of her armpits. It was cancer.

"It grew from stage one to stage two in just a week," Connie said.

BrieAna started a regimen of chemotherapy treatments and surgeries. She's experienced the hair loss, the curious stares from strangers, the tired and weak days, and everything else that an adult with cancer would experience. But for a toddler who has little recollection of life before cancer, these things are just part of life. She doesn't have the life experience to interpret anything any other way than honestly.

One time, when BrieAna was almost bald from chemo treatments, her mother tried to put a bow in the remaining strands.

"She tore out the bow and said, 'I can't

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### Coping.....from page 4

wear pretty bow, I don't have pretty hair," Connie said.

Ask her if there's anything good about cancer and BrieAna might tell you about cancer camp at For One Another near Bozeman, or she might tell you the name of her favorite nurse. What she might not know to tell you is the lesson she teaches to those who are lucky enough to meet her.

One afternoon, a group of students from Smith School was invited to the hospital to hear a presentation given by Connie on childhood cancer. The students learned such things as the most common types of cancer in children (leukemia, lymphoma and brain cancer), the different ways cancer can be treated (surgery, chemotherapy, radiation and bone marrow transplants) and what causes cancer in children (no one knows).

The students also got to meet BrieAna. They got to see that someone with cancer can look and act just like their little sister. They got to meet someone who doesn't take life for granted. As Connie told them, "BrieAna's learned that you don't know what cancer brings. She's happy she's got today."

What she's also got is a room full of new friends. Connie said that BrieAna only has to get chemotherapy for another year; she's responding well to the treatment.

"She's got a 90 percent chance of recovery," Connie said.

After about a half-hour, this chemo ses-

sion is over. BrieAna's hesitant to shut off "Blue's Clues" since one of the other good things about having cancer is the cable TV at the hospital. After the nurse removes the I.V., BrieAna slips on her cowboy boots and waves goodbye to the nurses and other cancer patients. "See you later princess," they call out.

## Signs of childhood cancer

According to the American Cancer Society, cancer in children is rare, but it is the number one cause of death by disease in the U.S. in kids between the ages of one and 14. An estimated 9,100 new cases are expected this year, but about 77 percent of child cancer patients survive and continue to live a healthy life, according to the ACS. As September is recognized as Childhood Cancer Awareness month, keep these signs of childhood cancer in mind:

- Continued, unexplained weight loss.
- Headaches, often with vomiting, at night or early in the morning.
- Increased swelling or persistent pain in bones, joints, back or legs.
- Lump or mass, especially in the abdomen, neck, chest, pelvis or armpits.
- Development of excessive bruising, bleeding or rash.
- Constant infections.
- A whitish color behind the pupil.
- Nausea that persists or vomiting without nausea.
- Constant tiredness or noticeable paleness.
- Eye or vision changes that occur suddenly and persist.
- Recurrent fevers of unknown origin.

## Give the gift of HOPE

*Help make a wish come true for a critically ill Montana child. Make a donation to the Montana Hope Project in the name of a family member, friend or recipient.*

*A donation to the Montana Hope Project directly benefits Montana children.*

**HOPE - always the perfect gift**

This gift is made in: honor of \_\_\_\_\_  
memory

It is being given by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Name

Send confirmation card to: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Complete and send to: The Montana Hope Project, P.O. Box 5927, Helena, MT 59604**

## Dear Montana Hope...

Thank you so much for granting Mikaela's wish. It was an incredible adventure for the whole family. We were truly able to forget about all of the medical aspects that encompass our lives.

Mikaela was born with a bilateral cleft lip and palate. She struggled to eat the first year of her life but with the aid of many operations, we were beginning to see a normal child emerge. About the time that we thought we would have a perfectly normal child, she began to have seizures. Her MRI showed she had a lesion that was causing the seizures. They assumed she had had a stroke at some point during her development that caused the problem. A year ago this spring,

she was having 4-10 seizures a day.

We traveled to UCLA Medical Center. What we thought was scar tissue was actually a slow growing tumor. The surgeons decided that the best way to treat Mikaela would be to remove the temporal lobe and as much of the tumor as they could.

The surgeon was able to remove all of the left temporal lobe, except about a three-milli-



meter section near the brain stem. He was also able to remove all that he could see of the low-grade malignant tumor from both areas.

She has recovered beautifully. Mikaela still struggles with many medical appointments and tests due to her recovery and the ongoing repair of her lip and palate.

Her trip to Disney World gave her a chance to forget about all the time that she must spend in the medical arena. She especially enjoyed meeting Cinderella and Sleeping Beauty. It was truly a vacation that no one in our family will ever forget. We appreciate so much, all that the Hope Project does.

Sincerely,

*The Mike and Heather DeVries family*

# Dillon youth and family travel to Orlando

*Story from the Dillon Tribune*

Young Brock Stoddard had a wish. And in March, it came true.

Seven-year-old Brock Stoddard, who, although he has spinal bifida, is an enthusiastic first grader at Parkview Elementary School.

Brock, the son of Pam and Seth Stoddard of Dillon, was recently notified that he was going to have a wish granted through the Montana Hope Project. Brock was recommended for his wish by the parents of another Hope Project recipient.

When he was told he could not only have a special wish, but could go any place he wanted he said, "McDonalds!"

In March, that's exactly where he went, only the McDonalds was in Orlando, Florida, home of Disney World.

Brock and his parents as well as sisters Shaundra and Whitney along with brother Colt all traveled to Disney World as part of a wish made possible by the Montana Hope Project.

"This has all just worked out beautifully," Pam Stoddard said.

Brock mirrored his family's excitement about the trip.

Montana Highway Patrol Officer Ed Jones made the formal presentation.

"Children are the heart of the Mon-

tana Hope Project," Jones said. He noted the project exists to give critically ill children special dreams that may include Disney World, camping, computers, trips and more.

The Montana Hope Project is a non-

profit organization funded by tax-deductible, charitable contributions and donations. The project does not receive tax or governmental support. Its governing consists of Montana Highway Patrol officers and community volunteers.



*Photo by John Barrows*

**Brock Stoddard traveled to Disney World in March. Pictured with him are Shaundra Stoddard, Seth Stoddard, Pam Stoddard, Whitney Stoddard, Colt Stoddard and Montana Highway Patrol Officer Ed Jones.**



## Bahama bound

Twelve-year-old Christen Lane (with bear) of Anaconda is seen here with (L to R) Butte area coordinator Alice O'Donnell, Montana Highway Patrol Captain Janet Baker, Christen's parents, Shawnee and Frank Kieser and Montana Highway Patrol Officer Joe Wyant. Christen's brother Kyle Snyder is seen here wearing Capt. Baker's hat.

## Dear Montana Hope...

In September of 2000 our youngest son, Matthew, was diagnosed with Burkitt's Lymphoma. It is a rare and very aggressive cancer. There are only 100 cases a year. The bad news is that it is the fastest growing cancer in the human body. The tumors can double in 24 hours. Matt had two. One in his chest and another in his abdomen. This is also the good news. Since it is such a fast growing cancer it responds well to chemo-therapy. The treatment for Burkitt's is a very intense course of Chemo-therapy. Matt underwent 6 months of treatment. During those 6 months he was in the hospital for more than 3 weeks out of every 4.

When we started on this adventure we asked ourselves the natural question, "Why us?" Since we started down this road we had tunnel vision and had our eyes pointed in one direction. We are now nearing the end of this journey and have had a chance to look back at our trip. There is no easy answer to "why us?"

We've watched the mother of a dying child try to make his life as full of love as she could. We've seen little girls with only

a few strands of hair left trying to make themselves look pretty. We've seen little boys trying not to show pain. We've seen scared parents being brave for their children. We've had other parents trying to ease our fear while they were unsure of their own futures.

We've met doctors and nurses who have gone over and above what their jobs require. They have sat with us through the night because they knew that we needed the support. We've had a cleaning lady who was a cancer survivor sit down with Matt just to talk and let him know that he isn't alone. During our time in the Denver and Billings hospitals we have met so many like them. It takes a special type of person to not only treat children, but also the parents.

We've seen a famous athlete sitting at a child's table drinking "tea" with a 7-year-old girl on her birthday. He did it because he thought that it was the thing to do. All that was in the room was the little girl, her mother, and the athlete. She had no idea who he was. All that mattered to her was that she had company for "tea". Since then she has left us. She is gone but she will always be in our memories.

## Bahama .....from page 1

The Montana Hope Project will take Christen and her family on a seven-day cruise. The family will fly from Missoula to Florida where they will board the Disney ship.

"My grandma's always wanted to go for a cruise and now she gets to go with us. It will be so exciting. I can't wait," Christen said.

The Montana Hope Project is a nonprofit organization formed by the Association of Montana Highway Patrolmen to grant wishes to children with life-threatening illnesses. The program relies on tax-deductible donations, memorials and fundraisers such as the "Care Bear" logo sales in local Town Pump and Thriftway stores. An all-volunteer staff administers the project.

Some of the first to come to our side were the staff and students of Matt's 6th grade class. Within hours of the news getting out that Matt had cancer and that we were heading to Denver they were at our house delivering care packages for us to take on our trip. During some of the most trying times they sent us more packages and cards. We would sit for hours reading the cards.

I am fortunate to work for a very caring company. When we were at the lowest points of our lives and work was the last thing on my mind, these wonderful people came forward and donated their vacation time in order for me to be able to stay with my family.

During one of the most painful times of Matt's illness, his doctor told him to start thinking about his make-a-wish. She told him not to wish for something ordinary like a computer or trip to Disneyland, but to let his imagination go. When the pain would get unbearable and the drugs wouldn't help, we would start to talk about his wish. We would talk about having lunch with Jim Carrey and Danny Devito in Hollywood, or meeting up with

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# Butte teen raises \$15,000 for Highway Patrol project

Story by Janine Jobe  
of The Montana Standard

For some of Montana's gravely ill children, a Butte teen has been a money-raising, wish-granting godsend.

Shane Black, 18, began raising money for the Montana Hope Project three years ago and has raised a total of nearly \$15,000.

"I went to a banquet and met some kids involved in the Hope Project and I just thought it would be great to be able to help out," he said. "It's a great project and the people put a great deal of effort into helping the people of Montana."

Black raised money by soliciting pledges from Butte residents and businesses for the Millennium Car Show in Helena. He even began writing letters to out-of-town businesses. For his efforts, he recently received an award from the Montana Hope Project.

"He is a fantastic guy. It's unbelievable the amount of effort and time he put into this, Montana Highway Patrol Capt. Janet Baker said. "His commitment has helped

some kids and families get a little relief from really tough situations."

"The Montana Hope Project was started by the Association of Montana Highway Patrolmen in 1984 to grant wishes to Montana children with chronic and often life-threatening illness," Butte-Anaconda coordinator Alice O'Donnell said.

So far, 185 wishes have been granted.

"It was started by patrolmen who wanted to help Montana's children," she said. "Ninety cents of every dollar raised goes to help the children and only Montana children."

Sometimes a wish is a family vacation to Disneyland or to meet a favorite sports star. For other children, their wish is for a computer and a redecorated room.

"It's an absolutely wonderful project and I feel privileged to just be a part of it," O'Donnell said. "The look on a child's face when they get their wish just takes your breath away."

Black, a 2002 graduate of Butte High School, said he has no intention of slowing down his fund-raising efforts and hopes

two admission buttons to the festival and the show registration fee was waived for all participants that collected over \$50 in pledges.

This year's top pledge earner was again Shane Black of Butte. The Montana Hope Project wants to thank the Helena Preservation Society for their hard work in organizing the car show, Jim McHugh from Downtown Helena for his donation of the admission buttons and all the show's participants who made this year's event a success.

Please mark your calendars and plan on attending next year's car show in downtown Helena during the Mount Helena Music Festival June 21, 2003. Next year's car show will again be held in downtown Helena. However, the show is considering parking cars on Hill Park to better utilize the space by the band



Seventeen-year-old Shane Black of Anaconda raised \$6,800 in pledges for the Montana Hope Project at the Millennium Car Show in Helena. He was recently honored as the first inductee into the Millennium Show Hall of Fame.

to go to the law enforcement academy next year to possibly become a highway patrolman.

"The project is a lot of work. It takes up a lot of time after work and on weekends, but what cause could be a better one than helping those kids," he said.

## For more info...

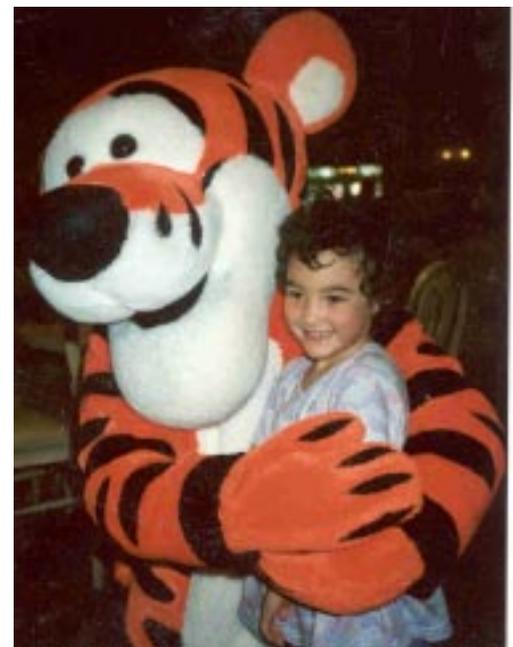
For more information on the Millennium Car Show, please contact Duane Preshinger at (406) 443-7069 or email him at [preshingerfam@msn.com](mailto:preshingerfam@msn.com).

# Helena car show grosses \$6,200

Story by Duane Preshinger  
Millennium Car Show Coordinator

The Helena area car clubs (Helena Preservation Society) held their 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Millennium Car Show with proceeds donated to the Montana Hope Project. This year's event raised over \$6,200 with over 110 cars participating from around the state. The car show was held in conjunction with the Mount Helena Music Festival in downtown Helena.

The car show registration fee was a donation to the Montana Hope Project. In addition, all car show participants were encouraged to gather pledges toward the Montana Hope Project. Promoters of the Mt. Helena Music Festival donated



Tiggerific!  
5-year-old Lorretta Lichwardt hugs her old pal, Tigger. Lorretta and her family visited Disney World in May.

## Dear Mt.....from page 7

the Beach Boys in Hawaii. His mother and I would always have something elaborate for him to think about when it would get tough. This is how "we" got through the worst times. It wasn't until Matt was nearing the end of his treatments that he finally let us know what he really wanted.

He wanted to meet the hard rock band KORN. He wanted them to take us shopping in two white stretch limousines. He wanted them to give him an autographed guitar and a lesson. He didn't sleep the night that he made up his mind. He sat up all night in his hospital bed writing down ideas about what he wanted to do with KORN.

I knew very little of the band. I am from the Beatles era. When he let us know what he wanted I tried to listen to their music. I was still not a fan, but this is what he wanted. This had gotten him through some very rough times. When we got back to Montana we got in touch with The Montana Hope Project. I wrote them a letter telling them about Matt's wish.

Kelly Mantooth responded to my letter very quickly. He too, was a little concerned that a concert date for Matt with this band was a little too raw for a 12-year-old. He did think that it would be great if he could set up a meeting with the band for Matt. He started to work on setting up a meeting. *Editor's note: Kelly worked for more than a year and half to set up a meeting with the band but the chaotic schedule of a rock band and real life of a sick child weren't able to mesh.*

Matt is 14 now and his cancer is gone. The chances of it returning get smaller and smaller every day. He made his make-a-wish a year and a half ago. Over time, a person changes. He has taken this way better than I could have imagined. He has had to explain to his class mates several times about why he didn't meet KORN. I think that he has given up on ever seeing them. I know that he secretly wishes that it would have happened. His replacement wish now is a go-kart. When we returned from California we let him get one with



**Care Bears.** Brian Bossard, Comptroller for Sutey Oil/Thriftway stores is seen here with Montana Highway Patrol Officer Glen Janes, Butte Area Coordinator Alice O'Donnell and Montana Highway Patrol Officer Captain Janet Baker. Care Bear logos are sold each April and November at Montana Thriftway grocery stores and Sutey Oil gas stations.



Photo by Leanne Smith

**Josh Thompson of Eureka was on hand to receive his wish in front of the 150 motorcycle riders from around the state that each rode 500 miles for pledges. Josh and his family traveled to Disney World this fall. The riders raised more than \$52,000. This year's event converged on Kalispell, MT from five starting points around the state.**

Dear Friends,

We wanted to let you know how much we appreciate your support of the Montana Hope Project Dinner and Auction. While this was the fifth annual event, it was our first as coordinators. Your contributions, whether they were in the form of donations, ticket purchases, item purchases or time and services, made this a very successful event for the kids of the Montana Hope Project. Approximately 150 people were present and about \$9,000 was raised at this year's event.

We hope you will consider supporting our kids again during the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner and Auction to be held on Saturday September 13, 2003. We learned a lot this year and next year promises to be even better. If you would like to help in any way, please contact us and let us know!

Our Heartfelt Thanks,  
Kim & Steve McDonald  
Montana Hope Project Coordinators  
3359 Winchell Lane  
Billings, Mt 59102  
406-655-4332  
Email: jksmac322@attbi.com

## Dear Mt.....from page 9

the money that Kelly gave him. Project Hope has done so many things for Matt and our family. The wish alone had gotten him through some very painful times, he has been able to go to DisneyLand, and he got a go-kart. Matt is very happy with his wish. His mother and I are very happy with Montana Hope Project.

We feel bad for Kelly. He dedicated a year and a half of his life trying to make a kid's wish come true. Every time he thought that he made some progress, another door was slammed in his face. Through no fault of Kelly, Matt didn't get to meet KORN, but he did have a memorable journey. As the excuses kept coming from the band we began rooting more for Kelly than wishing to see the band. We wanted to see KORN more for Kelly's sake than KORN's. We've come to realize that the band is for the band and Kelly is for the child. We don't look at this as a failure, but instead we look at The Montana Hope Project as a group of people who refuse to give up on a wish. When we first contacted Kelly we mentioned that this was a very unique wish. Matt did let his imagination go as his doctor ordered.

In this day and age we hear a lot of talk about heroes. We see people worship

singers, movie stars, athletes, and others that do what they do for the money and glory. Hollywood continually pats themselves on the back. The dictionary defines a "HERO" as "a person admired and venerated for his noble deeds or qualities". With this definition in mind we can classify many of the people we have been associated with over the last two year as heroes, with Kelly Mantooth at the top of the list. When President George H. Bush was in office he talked about 1000 points of light. I think that we have been extremely lucky to have been around a few of those points.

Now instead of sitting around and asking "Why us?", we are thinking of the wonderful people that we have met along the way. We have been wishing for our lives to return to normal, and to an extent they have. We are finding out that our lives have changed and they will never be as they were. There is nothing that we can do to change what has happened to us. What we can do, however, is think about all the

wonderful things that have happened to us. We will never be able to mention everything, or to give everybody the thank you that they so deserve. If this hadn't happened to us we would have gone through our lives not realizing what kind of special people there are out there.

Thank you Montana Project Hope for all the caring that you have showed. The children of this great state are so very lucky to have a group of people like you.

Sincerely, Bob Knickerbacker



**This photo was taken October 20, 2002, just before Matt got really sick. Although Matt was in isolation, Brian Griese of the Denver Broncos put on a hospital gown and came into Matt's room to visit with him. No news media, no hype. This famous athlete also had a tea party with a little girl the same day.**

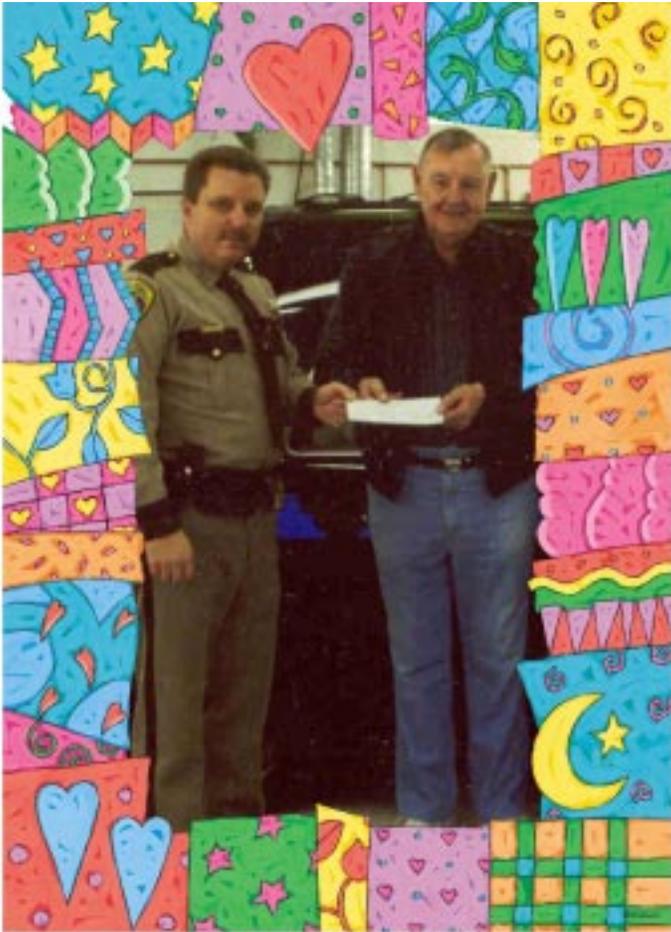
## Really cccool reunion

If you don't like the weather in Montana...wait fifteen minutes. This year's Hope Project Reunion saw sunshine, rain, wind and snow. Lots of snow. We stayed inside the Izaak Walton Inn and recipients, like Cyle Geiser, cuddled up with hand-made quilts courtesy of the Flathead Quilter's Guilds.

This year's Honor Guard included MHP Sgt. Butch Huseby, RCMP Constable Judy Devoe, Jefferson County Sheriff Jim Quinlan, MT Nat'l Guard Maj. Mike Bricker, MHP Sgt. Mike Reddick, Pipers Deb Strickland and Renee Whitaker of Hamilton, MT.

Commando Cody Stipcich (inset) waits for Major Mike to return. Cody's brother, James, received a wish from the Montana Hope Project in 2000. James took his parents and his seven brothers and sisters to Disney World. Siblings are always welcome at Montana Hope Project events and encouraged to join in the fun.





## Catching up with Mr. Klinger

Russ Klinger, right, has been a friend of Missoula Coordinator and Montana Highway Patrolman Richard Hader, left, since Richard was a young boy. We introduced you to Russ in our last newsletter after he donated \$10,000 to the Hope Project through the Klinger Family Foundation.

**Josh Thompson of Eureka,**

What prompted The Klinger Family Foundation to fund the Hope Project request?

“We’ve found children are our greatest future,” Klinger said. “That’s the thanks we give for what we’ve been blessed with when we see what other tragedies others go through with their children. I think these are children who didn’t get a chance and this is their opportunity to dream.”

The generous contribution of the Klinger Family Foundation will enable two Montana children to realize their dreams and wishes.

Russ and his wife Helen have two grown boys with families of their own and one grandchild. Their family foundation funds organizations that do not receive money from government sources. He and his wife screen applications and choose which requests to fund.

Klinger and his wife are Montana natives who spent 32 years living and working in Asia. They returned to Montana in 1999. They make their home in Missoula and Nevada. According to Klinger, their foundation funds efforts in Montana and Nevada.

We look forward to seeing Russ and his wife at the 2003 Hope Project Reunion in Essex.

**SET (upper left right) was on hand to receive his wish in front of the 150 motorcycle riders from around the state that each rode 500 miles for his wish. Josh and his family will travel to Disney World in the fall. The riders raised more than \$52,000. This year’s event converged on Kalispell, MT from five starting points around the state.**

**and his wife and his wife and their families met the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps Blue Angels precision flying team at the Heart**

## Golfers thanked

The Montana Hope Project would like to thank Mountain West Bank, Helena; Power Chevrolet, Helena; Dick Irwin Trucking, Shelby; Merrill Lynch- James Purdy, Great Falls; The Bozeman Clinic; The Blackfeet Trading Post, Cut Bank; Browning IGA; R & R Flooring, Inc., Bozeman; Chadwick Nursery, Helena; Rocky Mountain Credit Union, Helena; John Kurtz, Kurtz Law Office, Helena; Scott, Lynda and Ronan Reeves, Montana City; Shodair Hospital, Helena; Eckman Chiropractic, Helena; Hoss Repair, Montana City; Montana City Towing; American Federal Savings, Helena; Jeff and Lynda Douglass, Montana City; Elkhorn Mountain Inn, Montana City; Dr. Ron Hecht, Bozeman; Lifestyle Homes, Helena; Blake Etch, Helena; Amerigas, Townsend; The Mustang Hotel, Townsend; KC’s Tire and Glass, Townsend; the Horseshoe Cafe, Townsend; Fox Ridge Golf Course and Diamond Back Golf, Helena for their contributions to the 2002 Montana Hope Project Charity Golf Scramble. Our sponsors and the 80 golfers who played in the event raised more than \$5,400 - enough to fund a wish!



**Nicolas Waite of Great Falls is seen here with Montana Highway Patrol Sgt. Mike Reddick. Nick received a laptop computer along with a personal letter, autographed photo and other items from Bill Gates.**

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Montana Highway Patrolmen Gene Betz (L) and Richard Hader are pictured here with recent recipient Kenny Miller, Jr. of Missoula. Kenny, his family and a friend were whisked away from school to Missoula's Best Buy store for a shopping spree followed by dinner at Jaker's in a stretch limo provided by Valet Limo. The event was covered by local radio stations KPAX and KECI.

## Hope Project Facts

90 cents of every dollar raised directly benefits Montana children.

The Montana Hope Project is NOT affiliated with any national organization.

The average cost of a wish is \$5,100.

The Montana Hope Project is funded entirely by your donations and local fund raising events. We do not share our mailing lists. We do not utilize direct mail or telephone solicitation in our fund-raising efforts.

The Montana Hope Project invites each recipient and their immediate family to an annual reunion held in Essex, on the edge of Glacier Park.

The Montana Hope Project has granted 185 wishes since 1984.

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