

Montana Hope Project



Sponsored by the Association of Montana Highway Patrolmen

Montana Hope Project Celebrates 20th Annual Reunion



Photo by Creative Vision Photography

Past and current recipients pose with members of both the Montana Highway Patrol and Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Those sitting in the front row from left to right: Dustin Tulberg, Talen Gapay, Cile Geiser, Anitra Schmid, Tristan Killoy, Kyle Miller, Nick Kolstad, and Justin Roe. Those standing, left to right: Dillon Kroll, Mark Wilfore, RCMP Ian Patey, Sable Shafer, Trooper Pete Richardson, BrieAna Miller, RCMP Judy DeVoe, Cal Janes, Trevor Hughes, and Roger Jensen.

Montana Hope Project Celebrates 20th Annual Reunion at Izaak Walton Inn.

By Michael Hicks for the Cut Bank Pioneer Press

Glacier National Park, along with the Izaak Walton Inn at Essex, served as a late spring wonderland this past weekend for the 20th annual Montana Hope Project reunion. The annual gathering brings recipients and their family back together with other families for a weekend of fun, food, and escape from the realities of everyday life.

According to the group's official website (www.montanahope.org), the Montana Hope Project exists to give Montana's critically and chronically ill children the opportunity to have a special dream come true and to offer families the opportunity for an annual weekend reunion. The organization originated from the strong desire of Montana Highway Patrolmen to become more involved in the community.

The first dream was granted in 1984, when a handful of patrolmen used a van and their own money to take a family to Glacier National Park. Since that time, the Montana Hope Project has granted 238 dreams, with several more pending for 2005. Trips to Disneyland, Disneyworld, and the Caribbean; video game systems and computers; professional sporting events; meeting celebrities; and creating special bedrooms and bathrooms are just a few of the dreams granted over the past 21 years.

"What separates us from a lot of other groups is that after we grant a wish, we



don't forget the children," Mitch Tuttle, Program Coordinator for the Montana Hope Project, remarked. "That's what is special about this weekend at the Izaak Walton Inn. We never turn anyone away. For a lot of these children and their families, this is the only vacation they will get all year."

Starting in 1985, each recipient and his/her family were invited to a reunion at the Izaak Walton Inn on the first weekend of June. The tradition has continued and this past weekend marked the 20th anniversary.

"The Izaak Walton Inn has always sponsored this event, and they've been nothing but great to us over the years," commented Gary Bjorklund, Cut Bank resident and active member with the Montana Hope Project.

Throughout the years, many of the families struggle with medical bills and the emotional strain of having a child with a serious illness. The reunion weekend is free of charge for the families and gives the children the opportunity to be children.

"The emotional aspect and the enormous cost of care don't allow you to think about taking time off during the year," Cyndi Hughes of Great Falls said. "This weekend gives us a chance to have fun and be a family. Plus, you have the camaraderie of the other families and children here."

Cyndi's son, Trevor, has been diagnosed with chronic renal insufficiency. This is Trevor's first year as a part of the Montana Hope Project, and he hopes to meet the cast of CSI: Las Vegas, or visit the set of Mythbusters. At the present time, Trevor is waiting for a kidney transplant and has several potential donors that are taking the necessary steps to make the operation



a reality.

The Hughes family shared their story during a red jammer bus trip through Glacier National Park. Cyndi held back the tears when discussing her son's condition, but for the most part, the family was all smiles and showed strength of spirit that was nothing short of inspiring. In fact, Trevor's older brother, Josh, has begun a T-shirt design company with Trevor.

"I wanted to make sure that he wouldn't have to worry about working," Josh acknowledged. "He is the artist on paper, and I do the artist work on the computer. We're going to use the money to help with the medical costs. And once we're past that, we hope to sell shirts for other families and raise money for those who need it."

Though the page is not up yet, the brothers plan to have a website (www.addatudez.com) running in the future.

Along with the Hughes family in the jammer were the father/son group of Kim and Roger Jensen. Roger, who underwent six years of chemotherapy, received a television and Super Nintendo years ago when he first contacted the Montana Hope Project. The Jensens have attended several reunions in the past, and both son and dad pointed to the people at the Montana Hope Project

Continued from page 2

as the best part of the weekend.

"There are really nice people at this thing, and all of us are in the same boat," Kim Jensen noted. "Everyone has gone through it and can relate."

Roger concurred later in the day as he ate lunch with Trevor and Josh Hughes.

"I just met these guys last night, and now



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Volunteer Staff:

Mitch Tuttle, Helena, President
Perry Brown, Helena, Vice President
Cal Janes, Townsend, Secretary & Ride for
Hope Coordinator
Cinda Bourgeau, Helena, Media Coordinator
Richard and Tiana Hader, Missoula
Wish Travel and Missoula Area Coordinators
Dennis Delaittre, Three Forks, Bear Sales/
Distribution Coordinator
Clay Creek, Billings Area Coordinator
Alice O'Donnell, Anaconda/Butte Area
Coordinator
Jerril Ren, Kalispell Area Coordinator
Tom Taylor, Great Falls Area Coordinator

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we've been hanging out. I just love seeing the people at the reunion."

Roger and Trevor were just two of the many recipients on hand to enjoy the weekend. Saturday started with a breakfast at the Izaak Walton Inn. Then, the children traveled through Glacier National Park on various modes of transportation. Motorcycles, patrol cars, tour vans, and the famous red jammer busses provided scenic views of the west side of the park.

The children were then treated to helicopter rides before heading back to the Izaak Walton Inn. Once there, clowns and horse buggy rides were in order. Following a group picture of the recipients on hand, volunteers from across the state, including the Cut Bank Fire Department, came together to cook up a delicious dinner of chicken, pork, polish sausages, and hamburgers.

"This is just such a great weekend," Bjorklund said. "The kids are so special. It really is a great group. You start to have kids that come back each year, and I can't tell you what it means to see them grow and see those smiles each summer."

"It is a lot of work to get this weekend put together," Tuttle added. "But when you see the kids running around and having fun, it's more than worth it."

As the sun began to set on Saturday, the sound of children's laughter filled the Frank Krshka Pavilion outside of the Izaak Walton Inn. It was a sound that was common throughout the day.

"This reunion is just an extension of family for a lot of these people," Tuttle admitted. "It's a great relief for families to come up here and have fun. They don't have to worry about the finances and can just enjoy each other."

Tuttle continued, "This weekend is great advertisement for us, as we make ourselves known through word of mouth primarily. Tuttle added. "We're not a fancy corporation. Our offices are our homes. This is for the kids."

For those interested in donating to the Montana Hope Project, please contact a patrolman or Montana Highway Patrol office. Tuttle also stated the Montana Hope Project is always searching for new children to help out, and families should feel free to contact the organization.

PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE

WWW.MONTANAHOPE.ORG

Dear Montana Hope...
by Dustin Tulberg and
family, Missoula

How can we begin to say thank you? When I was first approached by some friends who had turned our son's, Dustin Tulberg, name into Richard Hader for fulfilling a wish I was astonished. We never felt that we were worthy of such an honor. After all Dustin does not have a fatal disease, but he definately has a life-altering situation. And then when Richard finally met with me and helped get our application ready for submission, I was so overwhelmed that I just sobbed. There will never be enough words to express our appreciation to you for all that you have done for our family. And what is truly amazing is that the giving just keeps going.

Dustin's wish was to go to Disney World. We started our trip on May 1st and from the very get go, it was beyond our wildest dreams. To be able to ride in a limousine and be served sparkling cider was the start of dreams. When we arrived at the airport, we were greeted by a man who was so gracious and caring. The Give Kids the World compound was so amazing that it would have been wonderful to just stay there and not do anything else. We went to Cape Canaveral, Cocoa Beach, Sea World, Universal Studios and then we spent our last days at Disney World. We were treated so graciously by the people that the experience was as wonderful as a dream could possibly be. For the volunteers at Give Kids the World, we want to especially give our thanks. You inspired us!!

But what is so amazing is that the dream never stops. We went to the reunion in Essex and the blessings just keep being

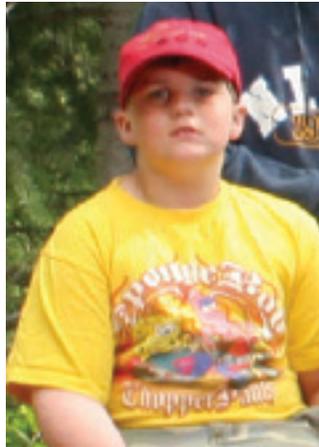


Photo by Creative Vision
Photography

poured on. Dustin will never forget the helicopter ride and riding in the side-cars. We feel that we have become part of a wonderful family.

Again we say thank you from the bottom of our hearts!!! Family such as ours have a different set of struggles than those of children that are dying, but some of the heartaches are just the same. We also experience the death of dreams and hopes for the future. But what is important is that each day is a gift from God and the experience that we are allowed to be part of, make up all the happy memories that we store away.

Thank you for helping us to make wonderful memories with our son.

Thank you from Christy
and Lily Peterson



Dear Montana Hope Project,

Thank you so much for the camcorder and all the extra equipment. It is all so

easy to use. I already have tons of great video of my wonderful Lily that I will treasure forever. Thank you.



From the Family of Trevor
Hughes

Thank you for choosing us to attend the reunion. It has been a long, almost, three years of Trev's illness. He is such an awesome child! We are preparing for his kidney transplant and hope to have a benefit for him at the end of July or beginning of August.

I can not tell you how excited I am to be able to provide a vacation for the boys because of your generous offer. We have not been able to do anything like this since Trev has gotten sick.

We're excited to meet you and create great memories of all those we will be meeting

God Bless, and, again, thanks!



Photo by Creative Vision
Photography

Kudos

The Montana Hope Project is able to continue to exist due in large part to the generous donations of many corporate sponsors. We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge some of them.

* KleenKing has once again offered a percentage of their sales

* Town Pump in Anaconda has been a consistent and generous supporter for many years.

* The annual reunion could not exist without the generous support from the Izaak Walton Inn in Essex.

* Wingate Inn supplies our kids and their families with a place to stay prior to their early morning flights.

There is not enough space to thank every business. We are thankful to each and every one of them.



Royce Bird (right) of Polson collected the most pledges this year. Debbie Smith-Jenkins was second with Wes Matson (left) close behind in third. The Montana Hope Project thanks these and every rider for their participation in 2005, and in making it the great success that it was!

2005 Ride For Hope Hits New Record!

The Ride for Hope begins in six cities throughout the state, and this year was no exception. Riders began in Billings, Havre, Great Falls, Kalispell, Missoula and Three Forks, travelling approximately 400 miles before converging on Anaconda in an attempt to make more of the state aware of the Montana Hope Project. After participating in a parade through downtown Anaconda, bikers, guests, and recipients were treated to a meal at Fairmont Hot Springs. Here, the top three pledge-earners were recognized for their efforts. Royce Bird collected the most pledges this year, with Debbie Smith-Jenkins and Wes Matson capturing second and third respectively. Mike Rallis won the drawing for the Caribbean cruise, and we wish him bon voyage, and a safe return in time for next year's event.

This year, the Ride generated more than \$82,000 for the Montana Hope Project, a new record for the event. Next year's event will have bikers driving 400 miles across the state before coming together in Kalispell.



WONDERING WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR OLD PLATE?

TURN THEM INTO YOUR COUNTY TREASURER'S OFFICE WHEN YOU PICK UP YOUR NEW PLATES OR TAKE ALL THOSE OLD PLATES GATHERING DUST IN YOUR GARAGE TO YOUR LOCAL MONTANA HIGHWAY PATROL OFFICE.

THE LICENSE PLATES ARE RECYCLED AND THE MONTANA HOPE PROJECT RECEIVES A MONETARY DONATION.

From the President.....

This year has passed by so quickly. I took over as President of the Hope Project in July. Vice President Perry Brown was instrumental in setting up coordinating this year's reunion and it was a huge success as always. He did an outstanding job and deserves many thanks. The children enjoyed themselves and the weather was great. It was actually warm enough to wear shorts most of the time. Hopefully the weather for next year's reunion will be just as warm. The staff at the Izaak Walton Inn deserves a big thank you for all they continue to do for these children and their families.

The next big event was the Ride for Hope 500. Cal Janes, the coordinator for the ride, did another great job. The many sponsors he works with to make this ride a success makes his job very demanding. Enterprise rent-a-car again gave us chase vehicles to follow our riders and make sure they made it to their destinations safely. Fairmont Hot Springs was a nice place to sit and relax in the warm water after riding for 500 miles.

We have been very busy with the Hope Project. We are completing a new brochure which should be out by December 1. Mary Blair has donated her skills to make a bronze of the "Bears that care" statue. This is the same as our trademark logo with the bear and the three children. It will be completed by September 2006 and ready for distribution. Our travel coordinator Rich Hader has been very busy setting up travel for the children and their families on the many different wishes they have. The most demanded wish is still the trip to Disney World. He continually seeks out people who are willing to assist with defraying the cost of these wishes. His dedication and devotion to the travel portion makes the wish worry free for the families. Our website coordinator Cinda Bourgeau has been busy updating our home page which was in dire need of help. She keeps this page running and demonstrates a professional image



President Mitch Tuttle (left), with Dale Sivumaki, looks on as the children enjoy themselves with the police sirens in Essex. Photograph by Creative Vision Photography

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

From the President...
continued from page 6

of the organization. Alice O'Donnell our Butte coordinator works tirelessly on project issues. She worked with Town Pump Inc. again to get their annual golf tournament as a benefit for the Project. We received a check for over \$9000.00. Thanks Alice and Town Pump. Tiana Hader our Missoula coordinator has been equally as busy. She has set up several fundraisers in the Missoula area.

I look forward to working with each and every person who wants to be involved with this fine organization. If you have any questions or wish to receive information on the Hope Project, please give us a call or drop us a note.



Dwayne Anderson receives his check, bear, and camera from Trooper Mitch Willett and Jeff Kent, as his family looks on.

Upcoming Events for
2006

- February 26, 2006 Bowl for Hope, Anaconda
- Spring 2006 Silent Auction, Billings
- June 2,3,4 Annual Reunion in Essex
- July 15 Ride for Hope 500
- August 5, 2006 Fun Run/Walk for Hope, Anaconda
- December 2006 First annual Christmas party, Fairmont Hot Springs
- TBD:
- Texas Hold 'Em, Kalispell
- Texas Hold 'Em, Great Falls
- Racquetball Tournament, Kalispell

The 2005 Children of Hope

HUNTER ALTMILLER	Disneyworld	Plains
DWAYNE ANDERSON	Disneyworld	Glasgow
LACEY ANEST	Disneyworld	Park City
ADRIENNE BERTIN	Carnegie Hall	Missoula
DANIEL BLIXT	Unknown	Pablo
SHELBY DESJARLAIS	Disneyworld	Kalispell
MORGAN ECHELARD	Pug Puppy	Belgrade
KAYLOR FEELEY	Disneyworld	Missoula
MICHAELA HOFFMAN	Disneyworld	Opheim
TREVOR HUGHES	CSI Grissom	Great Falls
CARRYN JOHNSON	DW-Jim Carrey	Bozeman
JACOB JORGENSON	Disneyworld	Bozeman
NADINE LONG	Alaska	Marysville
ALAN LOOMIS	Unknown	Billings
STACY MILLER	Unknown	Billings
MARISSA MOHLAND	Princess Castle	Billings
ALEXA NAYLOR	Disneyworld	Billings
JOCELYNN NORMAN	Glacier Park	Basin
JON-WYATT OLSON	Disneyworld	Ulm
LILYANN PETERSON	Video Camera	Billings
JESSE ROBBINS	ProBowl 2006	Missoula
SKYLEHR STILES	Daytona 500	Belgrade

News from Around the State

Anaconda/Butte
Alice O'Donnell

The second annual "Bowl for Hope" was held in February at the Cedar Park Bowling Lanes in memory of MHP 159 (Glenn Janes). All had a great time & this year the winning team was the Cedar Park Lanes Team. They each received a polo shirt. The 2006 tournament will be held at the Cedar Park Lanes on February 25, 2006 at 4:00 P.M. Please contact Alice O'Donnell@ aodonnell @montanahope.org or call her at 560-1340 for further information.

The annual Anaconda "Fun Run/Walk for Hope" was held on August 20 at Washoe Park. This again was held in memory of MHP159 Glenn Janes, & concluded with a balloon lift off. Lunch was served & all had a good time. The top pledge winners were Sara Wyant (first place), Maureen Parrow (second place) & Frank Moreni (third place). Next year the run will be held on August 5, 2006. Please contact Alice O'Donnell at aodonnell@montanahope.org or call her at 560-1340.



2k winners from left to right Sara Wyant (2nd), Frank Fitzpatrick (3rd), Ethan Reich (1st).



5k winners from left to right: Butte Entrant (3rd), Elisha Cassan (1st), and Tyler Kenney (2nd).

The annual Town Pump/Bud Light Golf Tournament was held in August 2005 @ the "Old Works" Golf course. In 2004, the Project received around ten thousand dollars. A Texas Hold Em was held in conjunction with the Anaconda Legion "A" baseball team & each group received \$5000.00. Plans are in the works to hold one again next year sometime in August.



MHP Golf Team from left to right: Cal Janes, Barb Lobdell, Greg Watson, and Art Collins.

During the month of December-Thriftway/Sutey Oil will once again be selling our logos. There are stores in Bozeman, Butte, and Helena & Anaconda. I ask that all support this.

On behalf of District 3(Butte/Anaconda) I wish all a Happy Thanksgiving & a Blessed & Happy Holi-

day season. We look forward to seeing you at our 2006 fundraisers

Billings/East
Clay Creek

We want to welcome Clay Creek to the Montana Hope Project family of volunteers. Sergeant Creek is the new coordinator for the Billings area and has jumped in with both feet. Currently he is planning a silent auction to be held sometime next spring as a sort of kick-off for the Ride for Hope. It is his goal to get more of the Billings bikers involved in this exciting event. If you need to contact Sgt. Creek, you can email him at ccreek@montanahope.org or call him at 698-5821.

Great Falls
Tom Taylor

The Rebecca's held their annual convention in Great Falls this year, and Tom Taylor was invited to receive a donation from them totaling \$6585.00. Thank you! We also had a great time at the Texas Hold 'Em tournament, which was co-hosted by the Montana Exchange Club. Currently plans are being made to hold another one next year. Watch the website for additional information. If you would like to contact Tom, you can send email to ttaylor@montanahope.org or call 868-1493.

Kalispell
Jerril Ren

We would also like to welcome Jerril Ren to the Montana Hope Project family of volunteers. Of-

ficer Ren is the new coordinator for the Kalispell area. Currently he is working on setting up another Texas Hold 'Em tournament in the Kalispell area, as well as a racquetball tournament. If you have any questions about these events, you can watch the Montana Hope Project website, or contact Officer Ren by email at jren@montanahope.org or call him at 270-0696.

Missoula
Tiana Hader

The Missoula Area coordinator has been busy this year. The Montana Hope Project participated in the Frenchtown Winter Festival on November 11th and 12th. Coldstone Cremery has generously donated 30% of all sales between the hours of 4 and 7 on the first Tuesday of every month. The Wingate Inn was the site of the annual sponsor recognition event, and the Wingate was nice enough to let our wish kids swim and enjoy another great day. We received a donation of \$5000.00 from the Russell Klingler Foundation, and

would like to take this opportunity to thank them.

We would also like to thank the Kurt Burlinger Foundation for their generous donation again this year that covers our reunion in Essex. Gillespie Realty donated \$4133.00, and we would like to thank them as well.

You can contact Tiana Hader by email at thader@montanahope.org or by phone at 531-1531



Helen and Russel Klingler with Richard Hader (far right).



Tom Taylor with a spokesperson from the Rebeccas.

A Big Thank You to a Resourceful Group!

Recently the Montana Hope Project was invited to join a convention held in Great Falls by a group called "The Rebeccas." Having not been contributors to our project, Officer Tom Taylor went, not knowing what to expect. To his surprise, he was presented with a check for more than \$3000.00. Additional chapters later added their funds, bringing the total to \$6585.00.

What makes this donation so unique is the way in which it is raised. Each chapter is given approximately \$40.00, and instructed to choose a deserving organization. This year, The Rebeccas chose the Montana Hope Project. Using little more than their imagination, each chapter then hosts several fund-raisers using only the money they were given and the elbow grease of their members.

The fruits of their labor of love are sincerely appreciated by the Montana Hope Project. So thank you, ladies, and good luck in your fund-raising!

New and Exiting Ways to Contact Area Coordinators

Area coordinators now have new cellphones and email address, making it easier to get in touch with them when you need to. If your coordinator does not answer, please leave him/her a message and you will receive a return call.

Area Coordinators

Anaconda/Butte	Alice O'Donnell	aodonnell@montanahope.org	406-560-1340
Billings	Clay Creek	ccreek@montanahope.org	406-698-5821
Great Falls	Tom Taylor	ttaylor@montanahope.org	406-868-1493
Kalispell	Jerril Ren	jren@montanahope.org	406-270-0696
Missoula	Tiana Hader	thader@montanahope.org	406-531-1531

Other Coordinators

Bears	Dennis Delaittre	ddelaittre@montanahope.org	
Media	Cinda Bourgeau	cbourgeau@montanahope.org	
Ride	Cal Janes	cjanes@montanahope.org	406-431-8650
Travel	Richard Hader	rhader@montanahope.org	406-531-1530
Vice President	Perry Brown	pbrown@montanahope.org	406-949-7433
President	Mitch Tuttle	mtuttle@montanahope.org	406-949-4673



From left to right: Jody (dad), Lexi (big sis), Lacey, Justin (big bro), and Leah (mom), with Mickey and Minnie in Disneyworld.

Thank you...

From the family of Lacey Anest, Park City

We just wanted to let you know what a wonderful organization you are. When we received the phone call from Richard Hader, saying Lacey had been approved for her wish trip, it was like a dream come true. We feel very blessed to have been given this opportunity to witness the miracle of what "Montana Hope" and "Give Kids the World" are able to do for families. We will be forever grateful for EVERYTHING that was done for us. A special THANKS goes out to a few people who made our experience an awesome one. We would like to thank Janet Baker for her reassuring phone calls and assistance with everything. Thanks to Richard Hader for all the time and effort he spent making sure that our trip was nothing less than perfect! Thank you, Thank you, Thank you!!!!

Our trip started at 6:30am, and the kids didn't even complain. This was our first plane trip so we were all just a little excited! We left Billings and the temperature was 10 degrees, we arrived in Florida and it was 70 degrees (and

Changing priorities - Battling rare cancer and chemotherapy, Sentinel's Jesse Robbins earns his diploma

Written by Rob Chaney for the Missoulian

About the only time Jesse Robbins darkened the Sentinel High School doorway this past school year was to eat lunch in the cafeteria.

More than 10 months of chemotherapy for cancer kept the 18-year-old senior

home for all of the 2004-05 school year. But thanks to home-school lessons and the regular lunches with friends to keep his spirits up, Robbins will graduate on schedule this Saturday.

Robbins endures the challenge of rhabdomyosarcoma, a kind of cancer that affects the soft tissues. It is very rare, and usually afflicts children before the age of 10. Robbins' condition reached the danger stage last summer, just before he was to start his senior year of high school.

Instead, in August, he began 42 weeks of chemotherapy. The former offensive tackle went from 240 pounds to 190. The medications often made him too sick to get out of bed, and still make it hard to concentrate at times.

One positive side effect was the growing strength of his high school friendships.

"My friends have been with me ever since the beginning," Robbins said. "They drove over to Spokane to see me."

Robbins would keep up on school news with regular stops to the Sentinel cafeteria for lunch. His friends would also stop by the house, or pick him up for some after-school fun.

"There have been times when I would have given up," his mother, Juanita

that was the coolest day of our trip). When we arrived at "Give Kids the World" the kids thought they had just entered a dreamland. Everything a kid could imagine was at their fingertips, from the ice-cream parlor to the movie theater; with the make your own pixy sticks, to the game arcade, and also the miniature golf course. This was just our first evening!!!

The next adventure was the Theme Parks. From the time we entered the gates, we were treated like royalty. When Lacey showed her "magic button" people did everything in their power to make sure she was happy and having a good time. She received free ride pictures, a free tattoo, free fish to feed to the sharks and more. We were able to ride almost all the rides that our little hearts desired!!

We know that if we went back to the Theme Parks, it would be nothing like the experience that "Montana Hope" made possible for us. Words cannot express how much we truly appreciate everything that was provided for us. On our first evening there, my husband made the remark "I didn't know that there was still this much good out there." Thank You to everyone for making our little girl's dream (and ours) come true.

Thank you and God bless you all!

Robbins, said. "I think the time he spends with his friends has kept him going. They go golfing and if he can't finish, they don't finish. They go bowling and if he can only play one frame, they all play one frame."

For classmate James Parmenter, Robbins' cancer was a call to re-examine his own choices.

"It told me how short life really was," Parmenter said. "It told me money isn't a measure of self-worth - those fundamental lessons that most people don't learn until they're 60 or 70."

In particular, it prompted him to rethink his goal of getting a business degree in college. He enrolled in advanced-placement art classes.

"I found out I want to do something I enjoy doing," Parmenter said, "something where I can see a finished product at the end."

Robbins kept up his high school credits through the school district's Homebound Program, where tutor Mary Gay Olmquist delivered lessons to his home.

Last year, more than 100 high school students got their lessons through the Homebound Program, according to coordinator and Franklin Elementary Principal Mike Maxwell. The program is aimed at students who for health or behavior reasons will be out of school for more than two weeks. Most of its participants have health problems.

"If it's just a week, the school can usually accommodate," Maxwell said. "But if it's two weeks or more, the absence can be devastating for them (the students)."

For Robbins, the hospital experience gave him lots of time to explore his own drawing skills. He decided his hobby of drawing cars could lead to a career as a draftsman or automotive engineer, working on custom fabrication designs. For his senior project, Robbins drafted the plans for a new car.

He also traded a tricked-out Chevy Blazer and a Honda Civic for a black Porsche 944 while he was in Spokane for cancer treatments. The new ride was something that seemed like a good idea at the time - when time seemed to be getting short.

"There was nothing else to do but stay in the Ronald McDonald House," Robbins said, referring to the long-term patient residence. Car trading is something he's been doing since he got his driver's license. While his family was in Spokane for an extended stay, they decided to cruise the local car market for a new project ride. He's since improved the stereo and the cooling system.

There are already plans to make up for last summer. Robbins and his friends have a road trip planned for mid-August, and there are several dates marked out for boating on local lakes. Robbins expects to be back in the weight room in six months, as soon as his bone marrow is producing enough red blood cells.

"I wish more people would try to enjoy life more," Robbins said. "You look at the outdoors and realize how lucky you are to go outside and do stuff. You realize how lucky you are to go to school."



Robbins (center), whose wish to go to the ProBowl is still pending, is surrounded by friends (from left) Jeff Leister, Tom Find, Eddie Marshall and James Parmenter.

*Photo by MIKE GREENER/
Missoulian*

**VISIT OUR
WEBSITE AT:**

WWW.MONTANAHOPE.ORG

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- Alice O'Donnell, Anaconda
- Jerril Ren, Kalispell
- Tom Taylor, Great Falls
- Dustin Tulberg family, Missoula
- Mitch Tuttle, Helena
- Dave Wojciechowski, Kalispell

Published annually by the Montana Hope Project. The Montana Hope Project is a non-profit organization registered with the Secretary of State. It is a 501(C)(3) organization and follows all federal guidelines to maintain its status.

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 Montana Hope Project granted 9 wishes so far in 2005 and 13 others are currently pending.

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 more than 240 wishes since 1984.

Please send all photos, letters, ideas information, updates , and articles for the website and future newsletters to the editor at:

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