

# The Community Counts

A monthly newsletter for Duke Pediatric Blood and Marrow Transplant patients, families and supporters



The volunteer-based Family Support Program is dedicated to caring for, serving, and lightening the burden of the Duke Pediatric Blood and Marrow Transplant Community through a comprehensive array of services and resources.

## Hendrick Pit Crews make their mark on 5200

We are grateful to have a special relationship with Hendrick Motorsports' Pit Crew for Kids, who visit PBMT patients and families four times a year. They made their way from their headquarters in Charlotte to 5200 in early December, bringing gifts, NASCAR and Hendrick memorabilia as well as lots of fun and laughter.



*Amber shows off her new guitar*

Hendrick Pit Crews for Kids is part of the Hendrick Marrow Program, which works with the National Marrow Donor Program to make people aware of the need for bone marrow donors. They also have a patient assistance program for families who are away from home for bone marrow and stem cell transplants. A big thank you to our friends at Hendrick for their continued support!



*David loves his new blocks*



*Alivia and her mom pose for a picture with the Pit Crew*



*Jaxsen and Zach are hanging out with Caleb*



*Rachel's princess is as big as she is!*

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## Patient celebrates in style!

Patients and families experience and endure many things along their transplant journey. Some have the experience of needing to be inpatient during special occasions such as holidays and birthdays. In November, one of our patients celebrated her 10th birthday on the unit. Gabby knew that staff and families were gathering together to celebrate her birthday but she had no idea that the Connection was going to be turned into "Gabby's Luau" to honor her on her special day. The room was filled with luau decorations, "High School Musical" plates & napkins, and Hannah Montana balloons. Red Velvet cupcakes were provided upon Gabby's personal request. The afternoon was filled with some of her favorite things (Hannah Montana, monkeys, and Bratz dolls to name a few) and many families came to the party bearing very thoughtful gifts for their new friend. Despite Gabby not feeling her best, she stayed for the entire party and was very thankful for all of her gifts. Moments like these continue to show the amazing love and hope that can be found when families and staff gather together to celebrate on 5200.



*Gabby (left) shows off her new Spiderman Bratz doll, a gift from her buddy Caleb*

## New Kids on the block



Joseph, age 10 mo  
Kitty Hawk, NC



Katie, age 16  
Lewisville, NC



Meredith, age 6

“New Kids on the Block” features the patients on the 5200 unit who were admitted in the past month. It is our way to honor them and help the other families get to know them.

## Elementary school reaches out to PBMT patients

Mangum Elementary school in Bahama, NC knows how to hold a toy drive. The idea came from two 4th graders, Michael and Colby, who wanted to do something to support Duke PBMT patients. So they approached their teachers, and then made a presentation to the entire school staff about their idea. Their original proposal was to do this as a 4th grade project, but it quickly evolved into a school-wide project. When the call came an hour before they arrived, we weren't quite sure how to comprehend what they were telling us: *two minivans* full of gifts would be pulling up outside of our offices to donate to the patients on 5200. No doubt they worked hard on this project, and definitely took pride in what they'd done. When the vans were unloaded, over 250 gifts had been donated - far more than we can distribute this holiday season! Some were shared with other units in the hospital, some were sent to the Ronald McDonald house, and others were tucked away to distribute in the months to come. A huge thank you to Michael and Colby and the entire Mangum Elementary school for their thoughtfulness and generous spirit!



Michael and Colby pose with a few of the gifts donated to 5200 patients by Mangum Elementary school students

## One more joins Super Steppers club!

One more patient has walked his way into the prestigious Super Steppers Club, a feat which requires one to walk a minimum of 250 laps while on the 5200 unit.

This month's Super Stepper inductee is Caleb, who walked 315 laps while on 5200 before being discharged.

A great job goes out to all of our determined walkers. Keep up the great work! We are very proud of you!



Caleb shows off his footprints!

## Built on firm Foundations

Over the past several years, two Foundations, formed by families whose children were transplanted on the Duke PBMT unit, have supported our patients and families in a variety of ways. They have been consistent with their support and have always listened and responded to whatever our current needs have been.

The Katie Swaney Foundation has once again underwritten our music therapy program, and has given us \$1000 for parking passes. A special thank you also goes to the Cassie's Courage Foundation, who again sent us WalMart, Target and Hardees gift cards. We appreciate the listening ears and caring hearts that both of these Foundations exemplify.

## Special events make holidays special for PBMT patients



*Nine families and staff attended the recent "Winter Wonderland" celebration!*

In recent months, the Family Support Program has collaborated with Katie Vogel (Healing and Hope Through Science) and Susan Trout (Social Work) to provide outpatient activities and support to our patients and families.

On Halloween, an outpatient event was held at Duke Gardens to allow families to gather together for some fun and supportive conversation. The event was a great success so it was decided to gather outpatient families together again to celebrate each other and the holidays.

On December 18th, patients and families were invited to one of the conference rooms in the Children's Health Center to engage in a variety of "Winter Wonderland" activities. Some of the activities available included: making foam gingerbread houses, cookie decorating, "snowball" toss, snowflake decorating, family pictures, and a group song - "This Little Light of Mine." There was also a room set aside for caregivers to have refreshments and supportive "adult" time. We are so glad that Brayden, Gabby, Chris, Levi, Marquise, Maureen, Kristen, Elmer, and Jordyn along with their families were able to join us for this holiday celebration. We look forward to providing more activities and programs to our outpatients in the new year!



*Jordyn and her mom work on a gingerbread*



*Levi is ready to "let his light shine!"*

## The chance to give back

Terry Eason was 15 years old when he was transplanted on 5200. He spent many months on the PBMT unit and months longer in Durham as he and his family endured many setbacks. Terry, now a very handsome 17 year old, returned recently with personalized ornaments for each child on 5200. He wanted to do something special for the patients and families on 5200 during the holiday season. He delivered them to each room (sharing his Duke PBMT ID badge in the process!) and wished every current transplant patient a Merry Christmas. It was a touching and powerful time for Terry's family, 5200 families and staff.



*Terry gives Rachel her ornament*

## Scenes from 5200

We wanted to share a few of the great pictures we took over the past month for you to enjoy....



*Elmer is all smiles*



*Joseph waves hello*



*Amber and Nurse Bobbi built a gingerbread house together*



*David and his parents pose for a family picture on transplant day!*



*Jacob and nurse Traci go for a ride in the wagon*

## Winner's Circle

We are grateful to all of the people who help support PBMT families through contributing their time, energy, and resources. We would like to thank:

- \* Kellie Gates for cutting caregivers' hair on Salon Day
- \* Norma Ferrell and Marie Lloyd for providing weekly massage
- \* AMTA North Carolina Chapter and Candy Walter for donating a massage chair for our Massage Therapy Program
- \* Mangum Elementary School and the Little Red Foundation for their toy donation
- \* Hendrick Pit Crew for Kids for their donation and visit
- \* Caleb and Courtney Hurd for their donation of a Nintendo Wii and games
- \* Janice and Kayla Roy for donating a Playstation game
- \* Oakwood Corporation and Nortel Networks for sponsoring three PBMT families for Christmas
- \* Terry Eason for his donation of Christmas ornaments
- \* Kim and Michael Koenig for their donation of Christmas ornaments

The individuals and organizations who made monetary donations:

- \* Cade and Delaney Kearney
- \* Jordan Komisarow
- \* Richard and Fran Rothenberg
- \* William and Terri Tomoff
- \* Cassie's Courage Foundation
- \* Cord:USE Foundation
- \* Fox Family Foundation
- \* Katie Swaney Foundation
- \* Durham Regional Associates of Realtors, Inc

Those who made gifts through our Target.com Wish list:

- \* Barbara Cohen
- \* Nancy Michaels
- \* JoAnn Drucker
- \* Rucha Nanavati
- \* Lori and Jamie Falow
- \* Donna Pack
- \* Marilyn Falow
- \* Denise Rothberg
- \* Rochelle Guterman
- \* Irit Stoppelman
- \* Brooke Goldstein
- \* Sedna Management

For those who provided meals on 5200:

- \* Cedar Fork Baptist Church
- \* The family of Camille Walton
- \* The family of Caterina Marcus

Those who contributed to our Community Meals program last month:

- \* Apex United Methodist Church
- \* St. Luke's Episcopal Church
- \* Little Red Foundation
- \* Trinity Ave Presbyterian Church
- \* Macedonia Baptist Church
- \* West Raleigh Exchange Club

If we have inadvertently left you off our Winner's Circle, please let us know!

## Wish List

We are in need of the following items:

- \* Photo paper
- \* Gift cards: Wal-Mart, Food Lion, and BP gas cards
- \* Playing cards
- \* We have specific toys, DVD's, and games listed on our [Target.com](http://Target.com) Wish List. Enter "Duke PBMT" (first name) "Family Support" (last name)" in the "Find a Wish List" search engine and go from there.

Many thanks for your support!!

**The Community Counts** is a monthly newsletter produced by the Duke Pediatric Blood and Marrow Transplant Family Support Program, distributed free to patients, their families, volunteers, and staff.

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