

RC Bowling League Year End Banquet



Senior Awards Will Aaron, Wyatt Neale, Dylan Stringer, Jacob Yocum, Korrin Therrien and Makayla Melson



Dylan Stringer, High Average Award, High Game Award, and Coach's Award Coaches Brad Rexroat and Linda Edwards



Hailey Pankop, High Game Award and Sportsmanship Award Coaches Brad Rexroat and Linda Edwards



Will Aaron, Sportsmanship Award Coaches Brad Rexroat and Linda Edwards

The Russell County Laker Bowling team held their year end banquet this past weekend. The Russell County School Board

members were in attendance as coaches Brad Rexroat and Linda Edwards handed out some very deserving awards.

MASON,

And just like the hands of parents reaching out, the community has rallied in prayer and support of the brave 13-year-old beating the odds in the battle against a rare type of cancer.

"IT JUST CAME OUT OF NOWHERE"

Ginger Hargrove said it started when her son "started having headaches."

"January 19, in fact," Ginger said - remembering the exact day all to well.

"He called me up from school, and he says, 'Mom, can I come home?'" Mason's mother recalled.

Mason had "a really bad headache...his neck hurt...his eyes hurt."

"Mason's the type to find every reason to STAY in school," his mother said, "so when he called me...I was like, 'I will be right there.'"

The next few days included doctor and emergency rooms visits.

"Tylenol and Advil just wasn't working," Ginger said.

Maybe it was migraines.

Mason's father, Aaron, had suffered tension headaches, so perhaps it was something hereditary.

A powerful shot was administered.

"Didn't even phase him," Ginger said.

By the end of January, things had worsened.

"He was waking up in the middle of the night and throwing up," Ginger said, "with headaches and eye pain."

A Saturday morning visit to the ER led to a CT scan of Mason's brain.

"They found the right and left ventricle had too much fluid," Mason's mother said. "And then they found a blockage...in the cerebellum."

"That's when they found the mass," his father solemnly said.

There had been no warning, no history, nothing to indicate Mason's medical dilemma.

"It just came out of nowhere," Ginger said.

"It was just like 'that'" Aaron said, with a snap of his fingers.

During a visit with Mason's primary doctor, a phone call was made to UK HealthCare.

"They shipped us off like, an hour and a half later," Ginger said.

"She (Mason's doctor) called UK Neurology, and they wanted to see us TODAY in the ER,"

Aaron remembered.

"So, we went home and packed a quick bag because we thought we were only going to be there for a couple of days," Ginger said

"We were there for a week," Aaron said. "She (Ginger) stayed with him, and I had to come back and get our other son, (Sawyer), and she's been with (Mason) ever since. She's been with him throughout his whole experience."

"YOU KNOW WHAT'S WEIRD?"

"They did surgery on the second (Of February)," Ginger said.

"They were keeping a good eye on him," Aaron said, "to make sure he wasn't developing more symptoms. They had him on a lot of meds."

Once Mason's tumor was removed, the family was shocked to know it had apparently "only been there two or three months," his mother said.

"That would have been around the end of October," she said.

"It was really aggressive," Aaron said - using a cell phone to retrieve an image of the tumor. "It was about two inches in diameter."

He looked at the black and white picture with amazement - rattling off statistics about how many people are affected by Medullablastoma each year.

"It's a rare tumor...more commonly found in kids," Ginger said.

"You know what's weird?" Ginger pondered. "We've had people reach out to us...and there was actually another lady...from here...whose son had a Medullablastoma last year."

"They say with this type of tumor, there's like 3,700 people in the United States living with this right now on average," Aaron said, "and then to sit there and think out of everybody in the

United States...two are in the same town."

"HE'S DOING REALLY WELL"

This time last year,

Mason was a typical teenager.

"He played football this past year," Ginger said, as Mason picked at a chocolate muffin.

"He was just a normal, 13-year-old boy," Aaron said.

Mason has "had to learn to talk, walk, eat drink" again, his mother said.

And each day, his smile grows brighter.

The surgery affected Mason's motor skills, but amazingly, he continues to make amazing progress.

"Just last week, he couldn't even use his right arm," GG said, "and today, he's using it."

The Hargroves praised Cardinal Hill for their rehabilitation efforts with Mason.

On this particular day, Mason sported an eye patch over his right eye.

"There's still a little paralysis on his right side," his mother said. "His eyelid won't close all the way."

"He's doing really well, actually," Aaron said. "They say he's on course."

Ginger said it could take "weeks, months, even years" for Mason to regain full mobility.

"It's like his brain in on reboot," Ginger said of her son. "He's doing things on his own time."

"THE WAITING GAME"

So, what does the future hold?

"Right now, we're just kind of playing the waiting game," she said.

The family is awaiting a date to begin chemotherapy and radiation therapy.

Treatments will be done in Cincinnati and here in Kentucky.

"We're looking at five times a week...for roughly six weeks," Aaron said.

Mason is diligent and determined.

"He does these little things," Ginger said, "like, if he gets up...he may be a little wobbly...and he'll say, 'Auto balance on!', or 'Work hand, work!' He encourages himself, so that's really nice."

"He has a surprisingly, really good attitude about everything," his father said. "I can only imagine going to sleep, and waking up, you know..."

"I'M PRAYING TO



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GOD"

"When we found out that it was cancer," Ginger said, catching her breath, and looking off into the distance, "I don't think I told anybody other than family and close friends. I waited like three days to tell everybody who was praying for him."

Ginger has strived to remain strong and stoic.

"When he came out of surgery...I was just so happy, and just so elated that my son was alive," she said through tears. "I just wanted everybody to ride that high with me."

Ginger said there's an odd sort of "happy/denial" stage she's experiencing.

"I hope he doesn't have bad side effects chemo can bring," she said. "I'm praying to God he won't go through all the sick days and the hard times."

"Because there's hope," Ginger said, with a confident nod of her head.

With family and friends in Hawaii, Florida, and California (The Hargroves moved here from

California over a year ago), and more and more people joining a "Mason's Journey w/Medullablastoma" Facebook page each day, the young man continues to inspire.

"He's got literally thousands of people praying for him," Ginger said. "I get messages all the time."

"THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT A SMALL TOWN"

It did take a little coaxing from a friend

to spur Ginger to create a Facebook page about Mason's journey, but she's glad she did it.

"I really never expected it to go this far," she said. "When I reached out to the community...I didn't know what to expect."

"There's something about a small town," Ginger said. "I was just looking for prayers. I wasn't expecting all the community support that we're getting."

"It's very touching," she said. "This is not something that would never have happened in our community in California."

"HE HAS A VERY STRONG FAITH"

Ginger said throughout Mason's ordeal, she has seen "something happen."

She can't really put her finger on it, can't describe it, can't find the exact words to explain it.

"We've never 'done' church," she said. "We say our prayers, we do pray, we've just never done the church thing. He (Mason) has a very strong faith. I don't know where this is coming from, I don't know. So I would definitely like to find a church for him to go to."

The past few days have found Mason's family taking him on a surprise trip to the Russell County Middle School to see friends, classmates, and teammates, and he was thrilled to receive a recent visit from his football coach, Bryce Bailey.

On Saturday, March 19, the Caretakers Riding Club is sponsoring a Benefit Ride for Mason.

Money raised from the ride will help his parents bills and everyday needs.

The ride is set for 11 a.m., at the former Kmart parking lot at Northridge Shopping Center, off

U.S. 127, in Russell Springs.

The event is "donation only, and anyone with questions/donations can contact Mike Berry at (270) 634-3405 or Joyce Holt, (270) 566-2046.


"We are just so thankful for everyone, and all that has been done," Ginger said. "It truly makes a difference."

UPDATE: The Hargroves learned last Thursday treatments for Mason will begin this week. Thoughts, prayers, and "good vibes" are appreciated.

HELP FUND UKRAINIAN RELIEF TIME IS RUNNING OUT TO HELP!!

If your church, business or organization hasn't contributed funds for relief, hear what one small Kentucky church did. It sent several thousand dollars to the Kentucky Baptist Convention. You can provide relief for the Ukrainians as well. Go to www.kybaptist.org or www.sendrelief.org to make your contribution. You can also email tom.riner@gmail.com for more information on how you can help by encouraging UPS or FedEx to help fly Kentucky supplies to Ukraine.

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