



Team Rallies To Help Sick Girl

By DAREK SHARP, The Tampa Tribune

Published: March 5, 2008

PLANT CITY - Through the course of the last year, the Durant High boys basketball team has made plenty of impact both on and off the court.

Four-year-old Allie Blain, who the Cougars encountered through charity work, made an impact on the team.

On March 15, the Cougars are putting on a pancake breakfast to raise money for a foundation set up by the family of Allie, who suffers from a blood disorder known as ITP (idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura). The fundraiser will start at 9 a.m. at the Beef O' Brady's restaurant at State Road 60 and Miller Road in Valrico.

The Durant team met the Blain family during another fundraiser in December, as part of the team's Success 101 group organized by head coach Jeff Shotwell.

"Our basketball players raised over \$900 to buy toys for All Children's Hospital, and we delivered the gifts in person," he said. "The morning that we delivered the gifts we met Allie. ... She is only 4 but is educated enough on her disease that she was able to explain what it was and what types of treatments she receives. This girl has to deal with all sorts of needles."

Shotwell was only happy to oblige when about a week later the child life therapist at All Children's Hospital said Allie's mother, Renee, hoped the Cougars could help with a foundation the family set up through the hospital.

The Blains' foundation, Clouds of Hope, will help children with the disease, he said. Shotwell hopes the breakfast can raise \$1,000.

A breakfast of pancakes, sausage, juice and coffee will be served from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. with tickets priced at \$5 for adults and \$4 for children 8 and younger. Cormac and Lora McCarthy co-own the restaurant at 2561 E. State Road 60 and are close friends of Shotwell's.

"The basketball team is going to be doing the serving, and I'll do some of the cooking," Shotwell said.

Indianapolis Colts head coach Tony Dungy, a friend of the McCarthys from his time in Tampa, donated several autographed copies of his book, "Quiet Strength." They will be featured among several prizes offered at drawings during the event.

Allie and her family spoke to the Cougar team last week at their Success 101 workshop. She brought a puppet named Daisy, which Allie can use as a visual guide on how to administer the medicines she is required to take. With ITP, the blood does not clot at the levels it should.

All of the proceeds from the breakfast will go to Clouds of Life. For information, call Shotwell at (813) 601-1189.

IF YOU GO

WHAT: Breakfast fundraiser for a foundation set up by the family of 4-year-old Allie Blain, who suffers from a blood disorder

WHEN: 9 to 11 a.m. March 15

WHERE: Beef 'O' Brady's, 2561 E. State Road 60, Valrico

COST: \$5 for adults and \$4 for children under 8

INFORMATION: (813) 601-1189.

Reporter Darek Sharp can be reached at dsharp@tampa.trib.com.

Find this article at:

<http://plantcity2.tbo.com/content/2008/mar/05/pc-team-rallies-to-help-sick-girl>

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.

©2008 Media General Inc. All Rights Reserved.

[Member agreement](#) and [privacy statement](#)