

Kings Crossing Resident Races for Leukemia and Lymphoma Research

by Elean Gersack

According to the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS), an estimated 118,000 people were expected to be diagnosed with blood cancers in 2006, and every ten minutes a child or adult dies from the disease. One Castle Pines North (CPN) resident, Paige Taylor, has worked hard in recent months to raise money to help find a cure.

Taylor's close friend lost a brother to Leukemia many years ago and this past August they decided to help. The two signed on with the LLS's Team in Training program, were assigned to a team, and began to work closely with a race mentor and other team members.

The team learned all about blood cancer and was assigned a patient honoree, seven-year-old Mason Hass of Highlands Ranch. Mason was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL) when he was just three years old. For the three years, Mason underwent treatment at Children's Hospital all while managing to go to school and play sports. He is now in the first grade and is doing very well.

"When I met Mason and his dad, I knew I wanted to do this for them and for all of the other families enduring this disease," said Taylor. "The patient honoree program really allows participants to connect first hand with the disease and those we are benefiting. When I run and feel like I can't go any further, I just think of Mason and what he has been through and I know I can do it."

In October, Taylor hosted a Casino Night at the HOA2 clubhouse and raised more than \$3000 for LLS. Local businesses – Little Italy Pizzeria, The Red Umbrella, The Ridge Golf Course and Castle Pines North Wine & Spirits - provided food and silent auction prizes for the evening. Even friends and neighbors came loaded with skis, Broncos tickets, Avalanche tickets and more for the silent auction. The evening was such a success that many attendees suggested making it an annual event – and Taylor just may do that.

On January 14, Taylor and her team completed the PF Chang's Rock 'n' Roll Arizona Marathon and half Marathon in Phoenix. To date, Taylor has raised \$3900 for LLS which will be used for research, patient services and education. "I've been able to raise a little money, meet some amazing people, and hopefully make a difference in some other people's lives," said Taylor.

For more information about Leukemia & Lymphoma, the Team in Training Program or to make a donation to LLS, please visit www.teamintraining.org/rmm. To learn more about Mason Hass and his fight against ALL, visit his website at www.masonhass.com.



Mason Hass of Highlands Ranch