

'Special angel' Katy died in Scotland

By DAN PELTON
Staff Reporter

Katy Wymant, the Orangeville girl whose fight to overcome cancer ignited the compassion of a county, died in Scotland last week at the age of five.

Katy was visiting relatives in Scotland last summer when doctors at Glasgow's Royal Hospital for Sick Children diagnosed her as having a brain tumor and high grade glioma, a form of cancer that gives its victims an average life expectancy of just nine months after diagnosis.

While innovative treat-

ment by Scottish doctors was meeting with a degree of success, Laurence Wymant said a July 1 MRI revealed that her tumor was active. Over the next two weeks, he said, her condition deteriorated rapidly.

Exactly one year from the date of being diagnosed, Katy passed away quietly at home in her mother's arms, squeezing her father's hands with the rest of her family around her.

"Katy touched and united many people all over the world," said Mr. Wymant.

"She was such an inspiration made us very, very

proud. "We are heartbroken by the loss of such a wonderful child, but are comforted knowing that she is now a very special angel." During the year-long ordeal, residents of Orangeville and throughout Dufferin County raised thousands of dollars to ensure the Wymants kept their home on Morgandale Crescent after having to relocate to Scotland because Katy was too ill to travel back to Canada.

Mr. Wymant had a message for the people who rallied to help: "Thank you for all of the love and support we have received throughout the year."

Tracy Kohut, a neighbour of the Wymants who helped administer the fund where donations could be sent, recalled, in an interview, that "the whole response was just phenomenal. I've lived in Orangeville all my life, but it was still incredible to see."

She flew to Scotland the first week in July to be with the Wymants. "I was hoping (Katy's passing) would not happen so quickly, but there's comfort in knowing she didn't suffer."

There were numerous fundraisers for the Wymants, including kids who sold lemonade, baseball and poker tournaments, the \$5,000 raised in a single day when Boston

Pizza donated 15 per cent of its gross sales, and an outdoor screening of the movie Iron Man.

The latter was staged by Blockbuster Video on Broadway.

Store manager Chris Hooper said he had mixed emotions when he heard of Katy's death.

"To be honest, I was sad but angry at the same time," said Mr. Hooper, a father of three. "I was angry that someone so small and innocent could be taken like this. I was with my kids when I heard and I kept thinking what I would do if something like this happened to my fami-

ly." As for the memory of Katy, Mr. Hooper said, "Our town will never forget her."

Katy's funeral was held yesterday (Wednesday) in Glasgow and there will be a memorial service when the family returns home to Orangeville in August.

Katy is survived by her parents, brothers Matthew and Alexander and half-sister Lauren.

In lieu of flowers, the Wymants ask for donations to the charity that "gave Katy so much happiness this past year," www.thekieranmessfoundation.org.

Children's Place closing

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care centres across Dufferin through our Pre-School Resource Program," CLD Executive Director Sheryl Chandler said in the same release.

She pointed out that care for special needs children has expanded to the point where all certified day care centres in Dufferin County provide full-time spaces for those children with special needs.

As well, the release said the provincial govern-

ment's announcement that children aged four and five will begin full-time education in 2010, has somewhat decreased daycare requirements.

"Today we face very different realities than those that led us to establish Rolling Hills 15 years ago," said Mr. Childs.

"Children with developmental disabilities are more integrated today and that's good. But, we are saddened that current financial realities make the closure of Rolling Hills necessary."

Recruitment

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the medical attention they needed," she said in her release. "However, six years have passed and nearly 20,000 residents of Dufferin-Caledon are still without a family doctor.

"I believe McGuinity is introducing a two-tier health care system," she said. "If you have a family doctor you have access to other health professionals, such as diabetes education or mental health, through a Family Health Team and referral to specialists. If you do not have a family doctor you do not have access to the new Family Health Team services and you must rely on the emergency department for your care."



Contributed Photo

WE HAZ JAZZ: Theatre Orangeville Musical Theatre Program participants (children ages 11-16) will be performing the mini-musical We Haz Jazz this Saturday, July 25, at 7:30 p.m. in the Opera House. The production is a lively romp through the history of great jazz rhythms and will feature 39 local youth who participated in the recent one or two-week musical theatre program. The participants have not only developed their musical abilities, but they have also developed their dancing talents in this wonderfully choreographed production. For a fun family outing, don't miss this wonderful event. Tickets are \$5 inclusive and can be purchased online or by calling the Theatre Orangeville box office at 519-942-3423.



Katy Wymant

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