

Currents



JANUARY 2005

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS CEREMONY

VOLUME 10.1

FROM THE BOARD

Dear Friends of Brendan's Fund:

In August 1990 my son Brendan began a journey along a path he never anticipated. He was diagnosed with a rare pediatric cancer called Ewing's Sarcoma.

His journey began as most do, with high hopes of a successful arrival at his destination. During the sixteen months he traveled its course, it took many twists and turns but it wasn't a lonely one. He took his family, friends and community with him with each step. His travels helped him explore his fears and brought him to a place of inner courage and peace far beyond his 18 years.

As one who journeyed every step with him, I found myself exploring my own feelings in a new light. The hours spent with my husband in the hospital watching our son's body slowly fail him made me think about the many other parents and children traveling the same path. I didn't want them to face our problems - mounting medical bills, distance from home and family, emotional isolation and finally, perhaps the loss of a child - without a system in place to help.

In December 1991, to our everlasting sorrow, our beautiful son and brother took the final steps on his journey and quietly left this world behind. Out of our loss, the Brendan Borek High Tides Memorial Fund (Brendan's Fund) was created by wonderful people who loved Brendan.

The rest, as they say, is history.

As we celebrate 14 years of helping families in Cape May County, this issue of "Currents" is dedicated to remembering our history.

Sincerely,

Lydia C. Borek

Lydia C. Borek

Eileen L. Johnston Mary B. Kane

Remembering Brendan



Brendan lived for 18 years and filled his life with joy. Active, athletic and well liked, you could always find him on the beach, a skateboard ramp or the soccer field. He was loved and supported in all his efforts by his family and was blessed with good and loyal friends.

Brendan's carefree life changed shortly before his seventeenth birthday when he was diagnosed with Ewing's Sarcoma, a cancer of the bone. For the next sixteen months he fought a courageous battle against unbeatable odds.

Although Brendan experienced great suffering in his life, he also experienced great love. Brendan's Fund was born out of this love.

His memory lives on each time Brendan's Fund brings comfort, help and hope to children and families facing the same battle.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

15th Annual Spirit Walk

Sunday, May 1, 2005, 12:00pm - 4:00pm
Wildwood Catholic High School, 15th and Central Avenue,
North Wildwood, New Jersey

Lace up your shoes and join us for Spirit Walk! Our annual 10K walk-a-thon is hosted by Wildwood Catholic High School. Mary Kane, Board member of Brendan's Fund, the staff and the many students of Wildwood Catholic started this tradition in 1991 to support the Borek family during Brendan's struggle with cancer.

Local Artist and Friends Art Show

Tuesday, August 16, 2005, 6:00pm - 11:00pm
Avalon Yacht Club, 7th Street and Bay Avenue, Avalon, New Jersey

Come see local talents as they showcase a variety of work at the Avalon Yacht Club including watercolors, abstracts, photography, pottery and sculptures. Our annual art show is organized by Deanna Ebner, a friend of Brendan's who incorporates their shared love of art into a vital fundraiser for Brendan's Fund. Enjoy music, food and beverages. All ticket proceeds and forty percent of artwork sold benefit Brendan's Fund.

Circle Pizza's "Pizza Day"

Wednesday, August 17, 2005, Open to Close
2108 Dune Drive, Avalon, New Jersey

Make it a pizza day! All net proceeds from the sale of any eat-in or take-out pizza on August 17 go directly to Brendan's Fund.

Surf Memorial Movie Night

Friday, August 19, 2005, 7:30pm - 10:00pm
Avalon Community Hall, 30th Street and the Beach, Avalon, New Jersey

Under the direction of Scott Soens & Company, Brendan's Fund continues an old Avalon tradition, the "Friday Night Surf Movie." Re-live some old memories and create new ones while previewing great surfing footage.

15th Annual Brendan Borek Surf Memorial

Saturday, August 20, 2005, 6:30am - 10:00pm
30th Street and the Beach, Avalon, New Jersey

All-Day Surf Memorial
6:30am - 4:30pm, 30th Street Beach

Local Bands on the Beach
10:00am - 3:30pm, 30th Street Beach

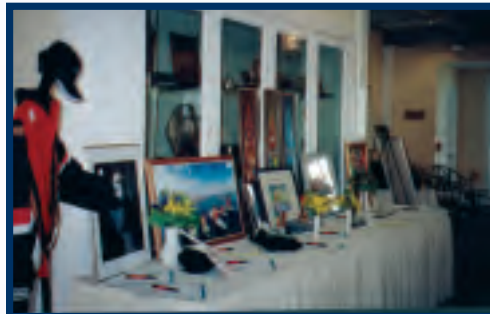
Circle of Friends Memorial Ceremony
12:00pm - 12:30pm, 30th Street Beach

Homecoming Party
6:00pm - 10:00pm, Avalon Community Hall

Every year on the 3rd Saturday in August, people from near and far, young and old join the Avalon Community to participate in and support the Brendan Borek Surf Memorial. This one-day event is Brendan's Fund's largest and most successful fundraiser. Join us on the beach for a day of true community spirit and see why Avalon is "cooler by a mile!"



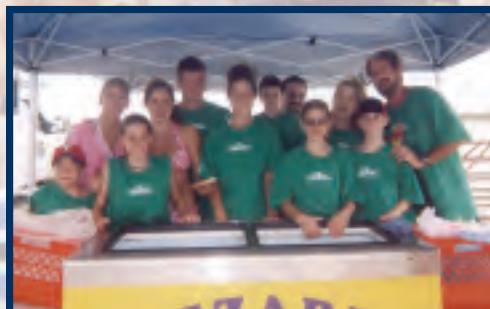
14th ANNUAL SPIRIT WALK, 2004



LOCAL ARTIST AND FRIENDS
ART SHOW, 2004



CIRCLE PIZZA'S "PIZZA DAY"



14th ANNUAL BRENDAN BOREK
SURF MEMORIAL, 2004



14th ANNUAL BRENDAN BOREK
SURF MEMORIAL, 2004

OUR STORY

Since 1992 Brendan's Fund has been helping families in Cape May County. Below is the history of how the money we raise and the work we do came about.

Spirit Walk *By Mary Kane*

When cancer strikes, it is not only the life of the patient that is forever changed. The lives of those around him or her are likewise altered. Family members, friends, neighbors, classmates, and teachers are among those who want to help in any way possible. Brendan Borek was a student at Wildwood Catholic High School when he was diagnosed with Ewing's Sarcoma. Eager to do what I could for Brendan, I became one of his homebound tutors. He and his family quickly became people that I continue to call friends.

At the same time, Brendan's classmates at Wildwood Catholic were constantly offering to do whatever they could in an effort to make things a little easier. Knowing exactly what to do is often difficult. Seeing that the family faced enormous bills from treatments, hospitalization, and travel expenses, the students inquired about a walk-a-thon to raise money. Wanting to respect Brendan's quiet side, they decided to call it *Spirit Walk* in lieu of using his name. With the help of community merchants, all resources for the event were donated. Local municipalities were willing to do whatever was necessary for the walk to take place. Parents, administrators, teachers, staff members, and friends filled positions at registration tables and checkpoints. In addition to being financially successful, it was truly a "spirit-filled" day as Brendan was able to join us and greet the many people who came to offer their support.

The event continues today. While many of the volunteers and walkers have been with us from the very beginning, new people join the effort each year. Participants of all ages continue to raise money for and walk in *spirit* with families of cancer-stricken children.

Surf Memorial *By MJ Soens*

On a hot July day in 1991 my sons, Scott, Mike and their friend Johnny came in from the beach for lunch. They stood in the kitchen looking at me with the saddest faces. They were distraught because their friend and surfing buddy Brendan Borek was sick, in fact dying of a rare pediatric bone cancer, Ewing's Sarcoma. They wanted to do something to show their support and concern for him and his family.

September 1 was Brendan's 18th and last birthday. Although he surfed his last wave that past spring, Brendan was still part of the surfing community. And so a group of moms in Avalon mobilized and organized a Surf Contest and Beef n Beer to honor his birthday and raise money to help his family with mounting expenses. Over two hundred surfers entered the contest. The borough of Avalon lent support and the community was exceptionally generous.

The day was very special for Brendan. When he walked up the boardwalk and onto the beach he was so surprised and touched to see how many people had come to celebrate his day with him. Brendan's shy grin broke out into a huge smile. His mother Lydia often remarks that it was the last truly happy day of his life.

Brendan's Fund *By Eileen Johnston*

One winter evening in January 1992, a group of women gathered together in the living room of Lydia Borek's Avalon home.

Less than two months prior, the Borek family lost their son Brendan to a courageous and heartbreaking sixteen-month battle with Ewing's Sarcoma, a rare pediatric bone cancer. Brendan sought treatment in Pennsylvania, Texas and New York. He treasured time home in Avalon with family and friends.

But for his mother Lydia, time at home away from the hospital and care of medical staff was filled with uncertainty and a sense of aloneness. Other lives had a sense of normalcy while hers was like riding a roller coaster.

Financial strain incurred during treatment - the cost of gas, tolls and parking along with overnight stays and meals away from home - mounted up over sixteen months and added to an already stressful situation.

The Borek's experience of feeling alone and financially strained highlighted the lack of support systems and resources for pediatric cancer patients and their families in the South Jersey area.

After Brendan's death, the Borek family resolved to found an organization in his memory. The driving force was simple - no other family should feel the same isolation and financial strain as they did. The two events held for Brendan prior to his death, Spirit Walk and The Surf Memorial, were designated as the organization's main fundraising vehicles.

And so, on that January evening in 1992, Lydia Borek's idea for The Brendan Borek High Tides Memorial Fund (Brendan's Fund) was given life.

Brendan touched the hearts of many during his short 18 years. It's fitting that an idea born out of love for such a wonderful person has built momentum and brought comfort, help and hope to many Cape May County area families who have a child with cancer.

BRENDAN'S FUND

The Brendan Borek High Tides Memorial Fund, Inc. (Brendan's Fund) is a grassroots organization whose efforts are directed toward providing comprehensive, compassionate and personalized assistance to Cape May County pediatric cancer patients and their families. Since its inception in 1992, Brendan's Fund has helped area families through the crisis of their child's illness. Services range from professional counseling and advocacy programs to financial and material assistance. To help in the fight against cancer, Brendan's Fund also contributes to pediatric cancer research on a discretionary basis.

YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS PROVIDE:

REIMBURSEMENTS: Illness related expenses, gas, tolls, parking fees, lodgings, meals and telephone bills.

ANNUAL ASSISTANCE: Thanksgiving and Easter Baskets, Back-to-School Clothing Gift Certificates and Christmas and Hanukkah gifts for each child and sibling.

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE: Payment of utility bills, monthly supermarket food certificates and, in extraordinary circumstances, payment of rent/mortgages.

Visit our office and The Store
21st & The Circle, Avalon, NJ

Other ways you can reach us:

U.S. Mail	Phone 609.967.0100
P.O. Box 41	Fax 609.967.3480
Avalon, NJ 08202	Email bren@brendansfund.org

Find us on the web
www.brendansfund.org

IN MEMORIAM

My Spirit's Wish

By Shana Renee Whelan

*My soul is mad, but my spirit is sad.
My Spirit's wish is to be set free.
Only my soul has it trapped inside of me.
The only way I can let it go is to have my soul
find a home
To that I shall die,
That way my spirit can be free
To fly in the high deep blue sky.
Where I would fly is named Heaven.
When you are in Heaven,
you will always know
That you will always be part of
Jesus' loving heart.*

Always loved and remembered

Brendan Borek
Hannah Clark
Allison Clayton
Dominique D'Amico
Christina Filippo
Arthur Jermain Graham
Frannie Hardwick
Tyler Mahoney
Joanna Matthews
Scott McCaffrey
Jason McCullen
Rosemarie Miller
Isabella Morin
Christopher Nordberg
Joseph Schulte, III
Stephanie Selinsky
Christine Smith
Harold Snyder
John Sorensen
Guy Stauble
Shana Whelan
Nathaniel Wood