

September 16th:
Jack's Story, written by his grandparents, Maggie and Andy

Basic facts about our grandson, Jack: Diagnosed in March of 2008 after a stroke caused by his brain tumor. 14 hours of surgery, which, against all odds, he survived. Weeks in ICU, hemiparesis, years of therapies, scans, etc.

We are blessed to be able to write Jack's story 10 years into his cancer journey. As he grew from early childhood into his teens, he became a young man truly worthy of respect. The celebration of his 15th birthday this past July was a recognition that he is with us and thriving despite the setbacks he continues to overcome.

Jack's physical obstacles continue to be the significant effects of the strokes he had back in 2008, yet he overcomes them successfully each day. Among therapies, scans, learning differences, and partial blindness, he excels in school (National Junior Honor Society, 7th & 8th grade). He pushes for inclusion through such efforts as joining both the track team (shot put & discus) and an Odyssey of the Mind team that went to the world competition in Iowa in June. Jack looks forward to high school as a great student, a natural leader and a person who loves to postpone homework as long as his parents will tolerate. He also believes that 15 minutes is a suitable period between meals.

In the larger community, Jack takes the wisdom he learned from his experiences to others however he can. He wrote and delivered a speech to hundreds of adults at PCFLV's Hearts of Gold Gala this past year. Along with volunteering at PCFLV's Camp Smile, he was a camper buddy at Camelot for Children's summer camp this year.

As all cancer families know, Jack's scans continue to give us "scanxiety" because the tumor remnants remain. He works and works at therapies of different kinds. Our greater family, grandparents, parents and friends of Jack & his family, takes joy everyday from his strength, courage, humility and a wicked sense of humor.