

Foundation raising funds to fight brainstem tumors

On Jan. 22, 2006, while playing basketball with his three brothers, 5-year-old Tyler Scott of Charlotte fell and said he had hurt his wrist.

While it first appeared nothing was wrong, the family doctor noticed Tyler was not using his left hand, and he suggested a follow-up visit.



NONPROFIT NEWS

Todd Cohen

Eight days later, Tyler was diagnosed with a brainstem glioma tumor, and within two days he was accepted for an experimental treatment program at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, Tenn.

But after his parents took him to St. Jude, the doctors concluded he could not be treated.

On Feb. 8, Tyler died.

To help fight the disease — which afflicts about 300 Americans each year, most of them children ages 5 to 9 — Tyler's parents, Howard and Dana Scott, decided to form a foundation, known as Tyler's Treehouse.

Collecting funds primarily through a 5K road race and a golf outing at Firethorne Country Club, the foundation has raised \$112,000 and given \$50,000 to St. Jude and \$8,800 to local children's programs.

Within 10 years, Howard Scott says, the foundation should be receiving \$1 million per year. This year, he says, the foundation will again sponsor the race and golf outing and probably add races in Greenville, S.C., and Atlanta.

The foundation, named for a 300-square-foot treehouse that friends built for Tyler in the Scotts' backyard after his diagnosis, also will begin seeking support from private foundations, donor-advised funds and corporate sponsorships and contributions.

Both fund-raising events have generated significant corporate support.

The 2006 golf outing, for example, featured a sports auction of items from the

Carolina Panthers, including a suite at Bank of America Stadium for a televised Monday night game, donated by Panthers' General Manager Marty Hurney.

Every dollar the foundation donates to St. Jude goes to brainstem glioma research.

All brainstem glioma tumors are terminal, and most patients diagnosed with the disease die within four to 10 months, says Brett Sovine, an attorney in the Charlotte office of Brown Brothers Hariman Trust Co. and secretary-treasurer of Tyler's Treehouse.

QUICKINFO

TYLER'S TREEHOUSE

Address: 227 W. Trade St., Suite 2100, Charlotte, N.C. 28202-1675

Phone: (704) 370-0500

Web site: www.tylerstreehouse.org

President: Howard Scott

Howard Scott says little is known about the disease because biopsies could damage the brainstem, and so they are never performed.

As a result, treatment typically consists of chemotherapy and radiation, although Tyler received neither because the tumor had invaded his brainstem and his condition could not be stabilized.

After he died, his parents donated his brain to St. Jude, providing the hospital with its first sample of a brainstem glioma tumor with its molecular structure intact. Researchers later estimated the tumor had grown over two centimeters in just eight days.

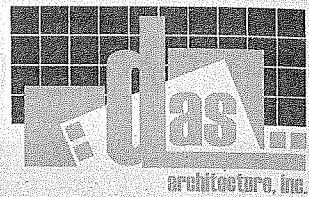
"When we lost Tyler," Howard Scott says, "my wife and I told St. Jude we would do everything we could to help them find out about the disease so other families would not have to go through what we went through."

Todd Cohen is editor and publisher of the *Philanthropy Journal* at www.philanthropyjournal.org. He can be reached at (919) 573-4642. Send story ideas to tcohen@ajf.org or fax them to (919) 573-4660.

NONPROFIT NOTES

Central Piedmont Community College will host Soup on Sunday, a fund-raiser for Hospice & Palliative Care Charlotte Region, at its Central Campus Citizens Center from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Jan. 28. For

party, employees provided gifts and a carnival-themed party for the center's 30 children.



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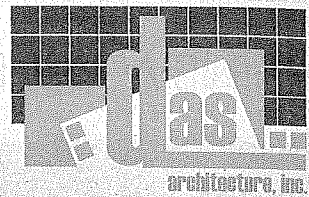
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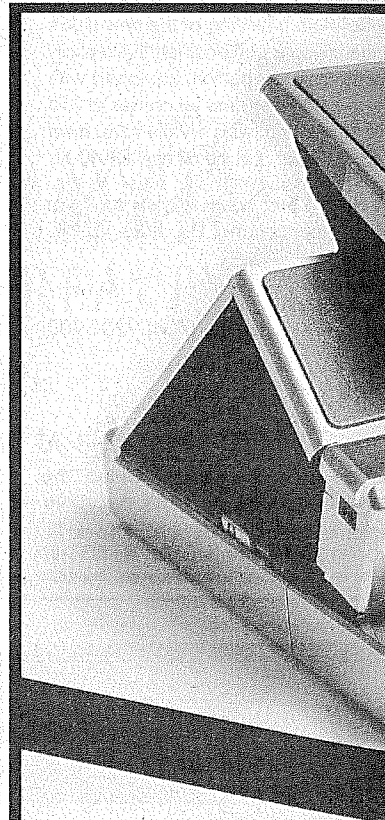
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