

Local Story of Hope

2007 Honoree Adam "Spanky" Zobrist



"Spanky" was diagnosed with Systemic Rheumatoid Arthritis just a month before turning five, with the help of AF, he looks to regain lost playtime in childhood

Dear Friends,

We'd like to introduce you to our son, Adam "Spanky" Zobrist. He is a delightful and exuberant 10 year who was diagnosed with Systemic Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis (JRA) a month before his 5th birthday. This diagnosis changed our lives drastically.

A few weeks prior to his diagnosis Adam had complained several times that his feet were hurting, but he was for the most part still being an active, happy child playing and enjoying his world. We just wrote it off as growing pains.

A few weeks later, on a beautiful April day, Adam woke up from a nap with a 104 degree fever, a rash all over his body, and in so much pain that he could not stand up to walk! Less than 24 hours later, the rheumatologists at St. Louis Children's Hospital gave us a diagnosis of Systemic Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis. From that day on, our lives and our son's world changed forever. It is extremely difficult to watch your child in pain and not being able to participate in the activities a preschool age child enjoys like playing ball, running with his friends, or riding his bike.

In order to treat JRA, Adam has tried numerous medications including Prednisone, Vioxx, Celebrex, Remicade intravenous infusions, Enbrel, and almost every type of anti-inflammatory drug

you can name. Currently Adam takes a daily injection of Kineret (Anakinra) and a weekly injection of Methotrexate. This combination of medications has not been effective in putting his arthritis into remission; however it is controlling his joint pain enough to allow him to lead somewhat of a "normal" life.

Adam loves to play soccer, baseball, and basketball. He also enjoys spending time with his family, friends, and his puppy named Izzy.



Since his diagnosis, the Arthritis Foundation has played a major role in our lives. Two major events, Cabin Fever and the Joints Adventure Camp, sponsored by the Arthritis Foundation have been incredible experiences for both Adam and our entire family. These activities allow Adam and us to meet and talk to others who are also trying to cope with the many challenges of Juvenile Arthritis.

Adam literally owes his life to the people who have in the past and those in the future who support the research and activities of the Arthritis Foundation. Your kindness and generosity has and will continue to make a difference in the lives of children. To all of you, we say "thanks"!!!!

**Warmest regards,
Dave and Cyndi Zobrist**