

# Ryan's Newsletter



The Ryan McElroy Children's Cancer Foundation  
 198 Route 22, The Atrium Building, Pawling, NY 12564  
 845-855-0211 www.ryansfoundation.org

Children's Cancer Foundation

## Our Featured Hero Sarah Hyman

*We first met Sarah back in September 2009. She was the first child featured in our brand new quarterly newsletter. Sarah had been diagnosed in 2007 with Rhabdomyosarcoma - a tumor made up of cancerous muscle cells. It's the third most common solid tumor that occurs outside the brain. 350 new cases are diagnosed each year in children less than 15 years of age, and two-thirds of the cases develop in children under the age of 10. Here's an update on her progress from her parents, Dan & Maggie:*



Sarah is now 6 1/2 years old, is in first grade and is doing wonderful! Sarah keeps very busy. She takes swimming lessons, tap, ballet, and hula dancing and she is in the Daisy's (soon to be bridged into the Brownies)!

During summers she attends a two week sleep-away camp near Port Jervis for children who have had cancer and it is staffed by many of the doctors and nurses from Sloan-Kettering. She loves interacting with other kids, so it is a perfect getaway for her. She also attends the town half-day camp so she can play with her local friends too.

Sarah was first diagnosed with Rhabdomyosarcoma in October 2007 when she was just 2 years old. She endured a year of treatment including chemo,

radiation, and surgeries, including removing of the fibula bone in her left leg.

Around the time she was finishing treatment, The Ryan McElroy Children's Cancer Foundation donated money to our family so that we were able to enhance our backyard project to include a beautiful Rainbow Brand play set with rubber mulch. It was perfect for Sarah to play and climb on, and great exercise for her considering that she had her left fibula bone removed, along with some tendons and an artery. The set provided a germ-free, safe environment essential to improving the quality of life for children with cancer. It's specialized, softer equipment and ground cover is optimal for safe play. Both Sarah and her brother, James, enjoy the play set very much to this day.

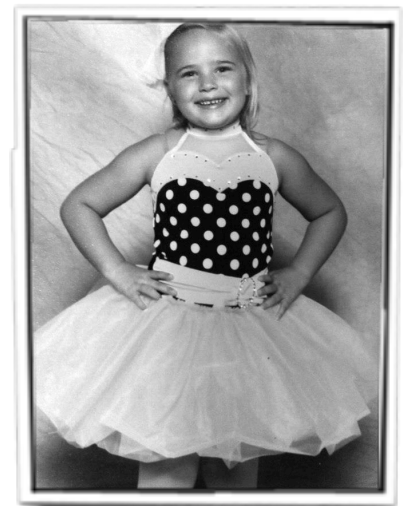


We are now four and a half years from the initial diagnosis and watching Sarah develop into a beautiful young girl. She became a big sister again in November, with the birth of Dylan Michael. (The middle name, Michael, is for Surgeon, Dr. Michael LaQuaglia, who performed the limb saving surgery on Sarah and removed the cancerous tumor.

Although life is 'somewhat' normal for us, things frequently remind us of what Sarah went through.

We are one year between scans and now seeing the long-term doctors. But today, as Sarah got dressed in cute shorts for school, she said, "I want to wear long pants because I don't want people to keep asking me about my brace." We felt so bad for her and comforted her the best we could. She got thru the day, but that is a simple reminder that this young, bright, six year old girl is going to start asking some difficult questions about why this happened to her.

We are very grateful that Sarah is with us today and know that many other kids are not. We are grateful for Ryan's Foundation and for all they do for families facing very difficult times with their children.



“ RAISING HOPE ”

## PEOPLE WHO GIVE BACK:

## MELISSA DePAOLO



May 29, 1973 - March 22, 2012



### Cancer changes everything!

"Death is simply a shedding of the physical body like the butterfly shedding its cocoon. It is a transition to a higher state of consciousness where you continue to perceive, to understand, to laugh, and to be able to grow." (Elisabeth Kubler-Ross)

It is with great sadness that we say goodbye to a tireless warrior against cancer. Melissa A. DePaolo, a lifelong Beacon resident, passed away at her residence after a courageous battle with cancer on Thursday, March 22, 2012. She was 38.

In 2004 Melissa's world changed so suddenly that even she could not foresee how the drastic turn of events her life would take would ironically enable her to make the greatest impact she would ever bestow on an entire community-- forever changing the lives of everyone who knew and loved her as well as hundreds of strangers who eventually came to know her and "FORGET-U-CANCER." At 31, Melissa was diagnosed with Stage II Breast Cancer and began chemotherapy, undergoing a single mastectomy including the removal of 27 lymph nodes three of which contained cancer cells. Melissa's life had turned into a ferocious battle with a devastating disease she knew little about. Immediately she realized that "CANCER CHANGES EVERYTHING." Without consent, CANCER turned Melissa's life upside-down forcing her to focus on her own well-being.

Melissa's own battle with this dreadful disease rapidly evolved into a "one woman crusade" to take on a cause greater than any she had ever faced before. Two years after her original diagnosis, a lump was discovered in her neck requiring the removal of her left breast. It may have appeared that cancer had the upper hand landing yet another sucker punch that would have knocked out even the strongest of women. Not Melissa! Cancer had chosen the wrong woman to attack. Every swing cancer took at her merely fueled the fire that was already burning brightly within this fearless warrior. Strengthening her desire to fight harder proved to be the greatest motivating force for her to create and run FORGET-U-CANCER, while undergoing treatments and actively seeking the cure needed to save her own life.

Melissa's career which she loved and missed was on hold. Regardless of whether she was working for Family Services Inc., where she excelled in their Crime Victims Assistance Program as an Advocate, Battered Women's Services or

Aids Related Community Services as a Case Worker, it was obvious Melissa DePaolo was put on earth to make a difference in the lives of everyone blessed to meet her.

In the midst of all this Melissa was aware that what she was experiencing was not unique to her situation and unfortunately she was not alone. It was clear that diseases of this nature were equal opportunity offenders, preying on anyone they so choose. Regardless of age, sex, race, religion or political affiliation, they could attack every aspect of every life they chose to invade, some more violently than others; but, no one afflicted is spared of their wrath. Melissa became determined to help lessen the suffering of others in any way she could as she knew first hand the vast array of endless challenges every cancer patient and their families face daily. While she empathized with anyone forced to fight this battle, she was deeply moved by the children she saw suffering while receiving her own treatments.

Slowly gaining recognition with events like the Stiletto Stampede, Power the Pink and Racing of the Beds, enabled FORGET-U-CANCER to donate thousands of dollars to hospitals in the area like St. Francis and St. Luke's Cornwall Hospital. As an adult cancer patient, Melissa's concern and heartbreak watching children suffer inspired her to generously donate to hospitals who offer pediatric oncology and specialty care such as Vassar Brothers and Maria Fareri Children's Hospital. It was with great pride that she shared with one reporter her gratitude to supporters of FORGET-U-CANCER events enabling them to grant funds to local hospitals and, in addition, to contribute \$2,000 to The Ryan McElroy Children's Cancer Foundation who focuses on the needs of children as they battle these dreadful diseases. Melissa journeyed on from this life, joining Ryan McElroy and all those whose lives here on earth have been cut short long before they were ready to leave the arms of those they loved most.

Her life and legacy will continue to impress future generations as the work she has started will always be present and alive within the community. Beginning this year, May 29th has officially been deemed "Melissa DePaolo Day" by her hometown of Beacon, New York. Regardless of what cancer had taken from so many, Melissa refused to allow it to rob her of the joy and laughter that will remain present at every FORGET-U-CANCER event for years to come.

To learn more about Melissa Depaolo or info on upcoming events go to [www.forgetucancer.org](http://www.forgetucancer.org)

## ABOUT US



**Eleanor Nurzia**  
**Board Member**

Eleanor Nurzia was raised in Mahopac, New York. After graduating from Mahopac High School, she went on to study at both Boston College, Boston, Mass. and The American University in Brussels, Belgium. She earned her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Economics from Boston College.

Eleanor accepted a position after graduation with Capital Restaurant Concepts in Washington, DC. She spent six years with them opening and managing new restaurants, working from the point of concept development. This foundation provided opportunities to work in similar capacities as a General Manager with Sutton Place Gourmet in Westport, CT and then as a Regional Manager with Jim Calhoun's Sports Bar and Grill based in Hartford, CT.

In 1999, Eleanor and her partner, Mary Nurzia, took over the operations of The Colosseo Restaurant in Pawling, NY. They operated this location for almost three years before making the choice to move and expand the business. The business reopened in a new location on Route 22 in Patterson, NY. The concept was revised and renamed Abruzzi Trattoria. Abruzzi has successfully been in business since 2004. Eleanor is now in the process of opening a second restaurant called 52 Main in Millerton, NY. This property is expected to open May 2012.

Eleanor's other passion is working with The Ryan McElroy Children's Cancer Foundation. She became a trustee in 2005. Now a seated Board Member, she feels blessed to be able to work with families in the fight of their lives and to work with people who give from their heart on a daily basis.

Eleanor is currently a resident of Sharon, CT where she lives with her husband Kurt and their boys, Erik and Elliot.



## ANNUAL GOLF OUTING JUNE 25, 2012

The Ryan McElroy Golf Tournament will be held this year on

June 25 at The Powelton Club, 29 Balmville Rd., Newburgh, New York (845) 561-7409. We are excited that again this year the whole family is included, not just golfers! The Powelton Club has opened it's doors for Ryan's Foundation! The Powelton Club is a full service private country club established in 1882 and is one of the oldest country clubs in the United States. They offer 18 holes of golf, 6 American red clay tennis courts, 2 swimming pools and a magnificent clubhouse. The Powelton Club golf course is presently 6,063 yards in length with a rating of 70. The existing design is known to be challenging, accentuated by wonderfully quick greens, tight fairways with deep roughs, and troublesome pin placements. The golf course is always excellently prepared and certainly a great test of golfing skills. Golf Outings are

a great way to gather friends, family, and coworkers for a fun day of golf and networking while raising money for children in need. Hope to see you there!

Please visit our website for more information.

[www.ryansfoundation.org](http://www.ryansfoundation.org)

**Registration: 11am**  
**Shotgun Start: 12:30pm**

**Cost: \$195 golfers**  
**(\$780 foursome)**  
**Non-golfers: \$100**

**Includes 18-holes of golf,**  
**cart, lunch and dinner.**  
**Raffles & Prizes!**

**Lunch: 11am-12:30pm**

**Evening Reception:**  
**6:30pm - 8:30pm**

**Includes:**  
**\*\*2 Hour Open Bar\*\***  
**Hot & Cold Hors D'oeuvres,**  
**Seafood Station, Pasta**  
**Station, BBQ Station,**  
**Carving Station, Bread**  
**Station, Powelton Club**  
**Dessert Station,**  
**Coffee/Tea**

**Sponsorships Available**



# FAMILY FUN DAYS!!

# Save The Dates!

**SPORTING CLAY SHOOT @ TMT Hunting Preserve,**  
302 Schoolhouse Rd. Staatsburg, NY 8am - 5pm

Please join us June 9 at TMT Hunting Preserve which offers a uniquely designed 15 station, 100 round course that takes advantage of the best features of the land and presents challenging targets closely resembling the flights of various game birds, waterfowl, and rabbits. Check-in for this event is at 8am, the course starts at 10am and breakfast and lunch is included. Prizes will be awarded. If you haven't already participated, you will want to join in the fun this year. The cost per shooter is \$150.00. This is a fun day for all while helping to raise money for children. Call Carl Merritt at 845-489-8725 or Art Hart at 845-546-7928 for more information. Sponsors Needed. Please check out our website for more information.

**5K WALK/RUN - 8 MILE RUN - CHILDREN'S 1/2 MILE RUN @ Lakeside Park, Pawling 7:30am**  
Registration

June 9 is the date for our Annual 5K Walk/Run. This is a family event for runners and non-runners alike. Starts 8:30am at Lakeside Park and continues through the Village of Pawling (past the special bronze memorial statue of Ryan) then back to the start. Face painting, pony rides, prizes, and awards. Entry fees are: 5K - \$22 8 Mile - \$25 1/2 Mile Kids - FREE if pre-registered. **Register by June 9** at: [www.mhrrc.org](http://www.mhrrc.org) (click shopping cart then race registration) or by mail at: "Ryan McElroy Children's Cancer Foundation" P.O. Box 452, Pleasant Valley, NY 12569. **Entries must be postmarked by 06/01/12.** Form a Team in honor or memory of a child or family member. Sponsors Needed. Please check out our website for forms and more information or contact Lori Decker at [lorirun4@hotmail.com](mailto:lorirun4@hotmail.com).

**ANNUAL GOLF OUTING @ The Powelton Club**  
29 Balmville Rd. Newburgh, NY Registration and Lunch @ 11am

The Annual Golf Outing will be held on June 25 at The Powelton Club in Newburgh and includes the entire family, not just golfers! The Club has opened it's doors to us which includes golf, swimming, and tennis. We hope you will join us this year for a great family day while helping us to raise money. The cost per golfer is \$195.00 or \$780 per foursome. Contact George Busolt at 845-797-8308 for more information.

**FAMILY DAY & CLASSIC CAR SHOW @ Lakeside Park, Pawling, NY**

The Annual Family Day & Classic Car Show will be on July 14 (rain date July 15) at Lakeside Park in Pawling, NY again this year. As in the past, we have lots of entertainment planned for the entire family -- live music, clowns, petting zoo, face painting, food and beverages. \$25 kids under 12 free. Car show registration is 12pm-3pm and Family Fun Day and Car Show is 3pm-8pm. Family Fun Day is included with Car Show registration. This is a fun day for all. Contact Jeremy Busolt at 845-702-7303 for more information.

**DUTCHESS COUNTY FAIR - Dutchess County Fairgrounds, Rhinebeck, NY**

Come see us at the Dutchess County Fair in Building B during the week of August 21 - August 26. Everyone is welcome!

**CELTIC DAY IN THE PARK @ Historic Mills Mansion, Staatsburg, NY 11am - 5pm (rain or shine)**

Come spend a fun day at Historic Mills Mansion featuring Celtic pipe bands, traditional dancing, kids' activities, hayrides, crafts, food, vendors and more. Other highlights include the Haggis Hurl, the Caber Toss and the Bonniest Knees Contest. The program finale is a spectacular parade of bagpipe bands, clan associations, and flags of the Celtic nations. Mills Mansion is located on Old Post Road off Route 9 in Staatsburg.

**ANNUAL FALL FESTIVAL TASTING EVENT @ The Grandview, Poughkeepsie, NY**

Ryan's Foundation, along with Hospice of the Hudson Valley, will be holding the Annual Fall Festival Tasting Event at The Grandview in Poughkeepsie, NY on October 25 from 6-9pm. There will be entertainment, auctions, raffles, vendors, and plenty of food, wine, and beer to keep you coming back again and again! Vendors are welcome to contact Steve Reverri at 845-249-5541 for more information about participating.

## "RAISING HOPE"

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NEWSLETTER  
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**IT'S SMALL  
ACTS OF  
KINDNESS  
THAT MAKE A  
HUGE  
DIFFERENCE IN  
THE  
LIVES OF MANY!**



# 2012 CALENDAR

- June 9 Sporting Clay Shoot  
@TMT Preserve  
Clinton, NY
- June 9 5K Walk/Run  
@ Lakeside Park  
Pawling, NY
- June 25 Golf Outing  
@ Powelton Golf Course  
Newburgh, NY
- July 14 Family Day & Classic Car Show  
@ Lakeside Park  
Pawling, NY  
Rain Date: July 15
- September 30 Celtic Day In The Park  
@ Historic Mills Mansion  
Staatsburg, NY
- October 25 Wine & Food Event  
@ The Grandview  
Poughkeepsie, NY

Watch for more events in upcoming newsletters.

Ryan's Foundation reminds you about our EFT feature on our webpage. Please consider signing up for recurring EFT donations so that we may continue our mission of never having to say NO to a child in need.

[www.ryansfoundation.org](http://www.ryansfoundation.org)



Give with recurring donations debited from your checking or savings account  
Thank You!!!

## FROM THE EDITOR

Ryan's Newsletter is published by The Ryan McElroy Children's Cancer Foundation, a non-profit 501 (c) 3 organization, dedicated to helping children who battle childhood illnesses and cancer by providing support that improve the quality of life for them and their families.

If you would like to receive your newsletter by email & help us cut costs on printing and postage, please let us know.

If you have a story you want us to know about, please contact our newsletter editor:

[sghavelka@gmail.com](mailto:sghavelka@gmail.com)



# GOOD NEWS CORNER

✓ Thanks to you Ryan's Foundation paid the hotel costs for the family of a child undergoing chemotherapy at WMC Children's Hospital.

✓ Thanks to you we recently helped two local families - one with an oil bill and for travel costs for last resort treatment for their young son battling cancer and another for travel costs for their little boy battling three rare forms of cancer.

✓ Thanks to your generous donations through our Newsletter we were able to help four families get through hard times.

✓ Thanks to all who came to support Ryan's Foundation at our Annual Gala on April 7. Even in these difficult economic times, you came out to support those who are fighting the battle against cancer and other forms of devastating illnesses. It is a wonderful tribute to Ryan's living spirit to see so many people stand with us in our mission to help those who are suffering. Thank you for helping us Raise Hope!

✓ Thank you to everyone who signed up for recurring EFT donations through our website. Your incredible generosity enables us to help support families in our area.

✓ Topical Biomedics donated 5% of their sales again this quarter!



From the bottom of our hearts...  
Thank You !!

Much gratitude to everyone at The Ryan McElroy Children's Cancer Foundation! Without your support Lauren's fundraiser would not have been as successful and the home modifications for her wheelchair would never have been completed... Sponsoring our family at The Ronald McDonald House the many months Lauren has been hospitalized helped us in more ways than we could ever express... We will forever be touched by your love and support... Love always,

Lauren Minard & Family



# I want to help donation form

Enclosed is my gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone-day: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone-evening: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

My check is enclosed. (Make checks payable to: The Ryan Foundation.)

Charge my donation to:  Master Card  VISA  Discover

Card #: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL COMPLETED FORM WITH YOUR CHECK TO:  
The Ryan McElroy Children's Cancer Foundation,  
198 Route 22 Atrium Building, Pawling, NY 12564

## ALL DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

A \$100 contribution will cover transportation to a hospital. A \$250 contribution will pay for food or utilities.

A \$500 contribution will pay for lodging or rent. A \$1,000 contribution will pay for a mortgage or medicines.

PLEASE HELP AND EMBRACE THE TINY THINGS IN LIFE.

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO MADE A DONATION AFTER READING THIS NEWSLETTER.  
YOUR GENEROSITY IS WHAT MAKES ALL OF THIS POSSIBLE! GOD BLESS YOU ALL!