

## Son is inspiration

# Group fights childhood disease

By Marie McGee  
staff writer

To four-year-old Scott Grandinett, leukemia means having "bad bugs in your blood" and being told they may never go away despite a lot of trips to the hospital, many painful injections, and chemotherapy sessions that cause him to lose his hair.

Right now, the bugs aren't acting up and Scott is feeling pretty chipper. A lot of his hair has grown back — enough so that his Mom had to take him to the barbershop last week. He comes it proudly and vouches that he's going to let it grow down to his shoulders — "just like Kelli's." Kelli is his 2-year-old sister who has long blonde curls that touch her shoulder.

Scott, who in his precociousness can trace the life cycle of a monarch but-

terly without batting an eyelash, doesn't associate his leukemia with death. Because his disease is in a second remission period, Scott is feeling so good right now it's hard for him to remember how bad he can feel when those mysterious bugs start acting up.

BUT FOR his parents, Janie and David Grandinett, the future is painfully clear. They know that leukemia is part of a group of cancers that rank as the No. 1 disease killer of children between the ages of 3 and 14.

In the 1 1/2 years since they learned that Scott has leukemia, they have also learned that there is still no cure and that only research holds the key to the future for Scott and children like him.

It wasn't a condition they took lightly.

Rather, with a group of other par-

ents, the Livonia couple formed a non-profit organization dedicated to the elimination of all childhood cancers. That was in September and since then, the group's members have raised \$20,000 which they will turn over to Children's Hospital in Detroit, earmarked for research purposes.

THEY HAVE NAMED their group Leukemia-Research-Life and it has the complete support and encouragement of Children's Hospital doctors, nurses and administrators.

In fact, it was in Children's hematology clinic that idea for the support group was born.

It was there that the Grandinett's, that was in September and since then, the group's members have raised \$20,000 which they will turn over to Children's Hospital in Detroit, earmarked for research purposes.

Because their children were so close in age, Mrs. Grandinett and Mrs. Dragan spent a lot of time talking and comparing notes.

They also shared the frustration of the bleak, unsure future that faced their children upon learning that research project after project was dropped because of the lack of funds.

From those conversations came the decision to form the non-profit group.

"WE WERE PAST the point of tears," Mrs. Grandinett said.

"We would often ask what progress was being made toward a cure," she recalled. "The hospital would tell us of exciting projects that were taking place. Then we'd learn that they were halted. When we asked why, they would

say because there wasn't any money with which to finish them. They said that maybe in two years there were some results."

"But two years is a long time," she said, "especially when you're talking about my son's life."

Of the founding group of eight couples, several couples have children who do not have leukemia. One of those couples is Sandy and Eric Devore of Livonia. The Devores also have two children. They and the Grandinett's are very close. The couples met when both husbands were employed by the Ford Motor Co.

TO DATE, THE group has a membership of 250 with about 35 of those active members. It also has attracted the support of Detroit TV personalities Byron MacGregor and his wife, Jo-Jo (Shutty) MacGregor, who serve as honorary chairpersons. The celebrity couple has "been marvelous" about promoting the various fund-raisers, according to the Grandinett's.

Livonia Jaycees have also been a tremendous help, the Grandinett's said.

Most of \$20,000 was raised via a raffle of 10 holiday weekends. One of the weekend winners will help sponsor the group's next fund-raiser. That will be a dinner-dance June 5 at Raristat House on Detroit's east side. Tickets will be \$30 per couple with set-ups and beer provided.

"We'd like to have something on this side of town," Mrs. Grandinett. "We're looking for someone who would donate the use of a facility."



BILL BRESLER/staff photographer

Janie and David Grandinett (seated) with the help of Sandy and Eric Devore (standing) helped formed a non-profit group to help fund leukemia research at Children's Hospital in Detroit when the Grandinett's learned their son Scott, 4, had the blood disease. One of the many fund-raisers the group is involved in is selling M&M's — a project Scott and his two-year-old sister Kelli wholeheartedly approve of.

## Griffiths to speak at League meeting

Martha Griffiths, retired U.S. Representative, will speak on "Water Politics" at the annual luncheon meeting of the West Bloomfield-Aurora Area League of Women Voters.

The meeting is scheduled for April 24 at 11:30 a.m., at Freddie's, 1990

Hiller Road, West Bloomfield. The public is invited.

There is an \$8.50 charge for the luncheon. For further information and reservations, call Anne Dziuba, 681-6264.

## Goss named city sergeant

The latest promotion in the Farmington Public Safety Department is Gary M. Goss, 33, who has been promoted to the rank of sergeant after four years as an officer.

Before joining the Farmington police force, Goss spent more than six years as a Detroit police officer following a three-year stint in the U.S. Marine Corps.

As sergeant, Goss will serve as the firearms instructor of Farmington pub-

lic safety officers. In addition, he will be an evidence technician at crime scenes and is a licensed emergency medical technician (EMT).

Goss was selected sergeant on the basis of his top overall score among six candidates in competitive testing which included a written, oral and psychological examination as well as his past performance.

Goss and his wife, Diana, live in the city of Farmington with their 12-year-old daughter.

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