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Contacts: Sean Ryan/Duncan Phillips
804.788.1414
sryan@hodgespart.com
dphillips@hodgespart.com

Jake's Reindeer Race Ready to Run Again

Young Boy's Story Inspires 5K Aimed to Raise Awareness for Childhood Cancer

RICHMOND, Va., November 12, 2008 – There are plenty of reasons to run a 5K in early December – burn off some fresh Thanksgiving calories before more holiday festivities, finally make good on that much-delayed New Year's resolution or maybe just enjoy the outdoors with family and friends.

How about running to fight childhood cancer?

Jake's Reindeer Race – Sunday, Dec. 7 at the Innsbrook Picnic Area – exists to do just that.

When Cindy and John Gary Maynard found out their 5-year-old son Jake had a rare foot cancer, they knew their family was about to begin a long and difficult journey. Now they've made it their mission to help others about to go through a similar experience.

“Our family knows first-hand what it's like to deal with childhood cancer,” Cindy Maynard said. “Jake's Reindeer Race is a great way to help advance the research and treatment options for pediatric cancer and help those families who are dealing with the same issues we are.”

Cindy and John Gary Maynard created The Maynard Childhood Cancer Foundation to raise awareness and provide funding for the research and treatment of childhood cancers, particularly sarcoma – cancer of the connective and soft tissue. Jake Maynard was diagnosed with

leiomyosarcoma, a rare cancer that formed in his left foot, when he was 5. Now 9 and a fourth-grader at Collegiate School, Jake is cancer-free but has endured 10 surgeries, including one that required the amputation of part of his foot.

“Not many people have survived what I have,” Jake said. “So every time I think of it, I really feel like I’m lucky.”

Added John Gary Maynard: “Treatment options for many forms of sarcoma are limited, and about 30 percent of patients with soft-tissue sarcoma survive the disease. Clearly, more needs to be done.”

In its first three years, Jake’s Reindeer Race has raised more than \$210,000. The event is a family friendly, self-timed race, and runners are encouraged to wear festive holiday apparel. Proceeds from this year’s race will go to pediatric cancer research at VCU Massey Cancer Center, pediatric sarcoma research at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center and the pediatric cancer literature programs at VCU Children’s Medical Center and Bon Secours Noah’s Children.

Schedule of Events for the race (Dec. 7):

- 12:30 p.m. - Sign In and Late Registration
- 2 p.m. - 5K Run/Walk begins
- 2:15 p.m. - Family Fun Walk begins

Registration is \$20 for adults and \$10 for children. The Innsbrook Picnic Area is located at 4600 Cox Rd. More information and online registration are available at www.JakesReindeerRace.com.

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