

Chino Champion (CA)

Chino Hills teen needs blood to fight 'fightable' cancer

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Thirteen-year-old **Jared Weissman** of Chino Hills has cancer, and people can't wait to read about it. A website devoted to **Jared**, an eighth-grader at Canyon Hills Junior High, has logged close to 6,000 hits in its first month.

The site, www.caringbridge.org/visit/jaredweissman, is sponsored by Caring Bridge, a non-profit web service that connects friends and family going through illness, treatment and recovery.

Jared is on it because he has Hodgkin's Lymphoma, a kind of cancer he was diagnosed with on Dec. 28, 2007.

The diagnosis is "shocking and ironic," his mother says, because their family had just returned from an annual pilgrimage to deliver cookies to walkers in the Three-Day Walk for Breast Cancer in November. Standing with mom, Alyson, and dad, Alan, **Jared** wore the pink shirt and cheered on the walkers.

Now he's undergoing treatment at City of Hope Cancer Center in Duarte.

"This is a very fightable cancer, it's curable in about 90 percent of younger patients," Mrs. **Weissman** said. "If you have to get cancer, this is the kind to have."

Jared's journal at Caring Bridge provides a place for family, friends, classmates, teachers and community members to get updates on **Jared's** treatment and well-being and just living with cancer in general.

A photo archive features frames of a toothy grin taken the day **Jared** got his braces off, an edgy new haircut and color when he found out he would soon lose it all anyway, and purple and green bracelets designed by **Jared**, bearing the words "fight, win, live." **Jared's** name is embossed inside, just under the word "live."

Most of the posts are from Mrs. **Weissman**, whose candor and humor pervade the site. On Jan. 28, describing the day she stood in the

Jared Weissman bathroom with her son to shave off his remaining tufts of hair, Mrs. **Weissman** wrote:

"First let me say he has a lovely head. Very well shaped and handsome. Secondly, let me say it was an honor and a privilege to be able to send my son into battle looking as he should"

On Jan. 22, she wrote, "Think of us today, as we travel to City of Hope, where **Jared** will receive another hit of the chemo that's saving his life."

When he's up to it, **Jared** posts, too. On Jan. 19, he wrote, "hey itts me **jared**, thanks for all of the letters, posters, gifts, and support. You all rock and thanks for helping me through this." On Jan. 17, Mrs. **Weissman** put out a more urgent call with a post that begins, "Blood! We need it now."

In response, a community blood drive has been organized from noon to 6 p.m. March 4 at Country Springs Elementary School, located at 14145 Village Center Drive in Chino Hills. **Jared** is a alumnus of Country Springs.

Jared is in need of type

- positive whole blood, and may soon require platelet donations. Anyone interested in signing up to be a blood donor at the blood drive may do so by calling the school at 590-8212 and leaving a message for Dee Perkins, or by emailing

Hearts4Jared@aol.com.

Anyone age 17 or older and in good health can donate platelets, regardless of blood type, however platelets cannot be donated at the blood drive and must be collected at the hospital only.

Because **Jared's** need is immediate, the **Weissman** family requests that anyone wishing to donate platelets or blood on **Jared's** behalf contact City of Hope Donor Apheresis Center, 1500 E. Duarte Road in Duarte, (626) 471-7171. All donations at the hospital are taken by appointment only. When calling, please specify that the donation is for **Jared Weissman** at the time the appointment is made.

"Donor designated blood is the best kind," wrote Mrs. **Weissman**. "It comes from you and it comes with all of your thoughts, prayers and love."

Jared Weissman

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