

Hope drives kids

Make-A-Wish Foundation kids were given joyrides in tractor-trailers.

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May 7, 2007 — Eleven year old Trey Horton stood in line with at least a hundred others waiting to get an autographed photo of his idol, country music star Kevin Sharp.

Trey became teary as he explained the most important reason he wanted to see Sharp in person.

"He's a cancer survivor," Trey said. Trey, other children and their families met Sharp at the Make-A-Wish Foundation Truck Convoy for Wishes at L&H Trucking in Hanover on Sunday.

For the sixth year, hundreds of tractor-trailers covered the parking lot and took Make-A-Wish children on a ride through the area to promote the foundation's cause and brighten the spirits of their passengers.

Sharp as a high school student was diagnosed with a rare form of bone cancer and told his chance of survival was slim. Make-A-Wish, which grants wishes to children with life-threatening illnesses, granted his wish to meet a music producer.

Sharp went into remission in 1991 and went on to gather a string of country music award nominations. He's also a published author and works as a motivational speaker.

Like Sharp, Trey has been told he has a poor chance of survival. Born with a medical condition that caused him to need a bowel and liver transplant at age 13 months, every day of his life has been a struggle to see the next.

But seeing Sharp, alive and well, was proof that Trey and many friends he's made through the foundation can survive dire physical illnesses.

"He's gone through a lot of pain ... I can relate," Trey said. "He's like an idol to all of us."

And despite multiple surgical scars that cover Trey's chest and abdomen, his courage and spirits remain strong.

"The hardest part is people coming up to you and saying you are not gonna make it," Trey said. But he focuses on the future. He recently started playing the trombone in his school's band and plans to one day play for the Penn State Blue Band. "I want to show them I can make it."

Trey's mom, Gettysburg resident Rhonda Horton, said Sharp is an example of triumph.

"They told me when Trey was 6 months old that he was gonna die," she said. "To see Kevin come from where he was and to where he is today, it just gives us all hope," she said.

After meeting Sharp, Trey climbed into the cab of a Say Plastics tractor-trailer driven by Karl Lindstrom, 63. The two have ridden together at the event for the last five years.

"It's like having a grandkid," Lindstrom said.

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