

Steve Maurer  
St. Jude

The story of Aubrey Rose is tragic, yet inspiring at the same time. She was truly a miracle and a fighter. I have been fortunate to have led a healthy, happy life. Stories like Aubrey's and that of Sophie Meinhardt from St. Jude have changed my outlook on life. There have been many challenges in my life so far, but ones that all students face. In my time at St. Jude, I have worked hard to maintain a high 90's grade average, while pursuing many volunteer opportunities. The times when I tutor younger students, serve as an altar attendant or cantor in the choir are fulfilling activities for me. The last few years, I have been able to expand my activities to include performing services for the elderly in the parish, spending time at the City Gospel Mission, Manna Outreach, and the Green Township library. However, one activity as truly made a difference in my life and in the life of a friend of mine.

My friend Matthew Meyer from our Lady of Lourdes school and I met in the fourth grade when we were playing basketball for Cheviot Fire. We had played against each other for years in basketball, football and baseball. The friendship grew stronger over the years! Then, one day in seventh grade during football season, I learned that Matthew was diagnosed with an unknown blood disorder. While we hoped and prayed for Matthew as a seventh grade class at St. Jude, I knew we had to do something else for him. We prayed for him daily and set up a baked goods sale and rummage sale to support his family. It still wasn't enough. Through the example of my parents, and especially my father who is a blood donor, I wanted to organize a blood drive for Matthew at St. Jude. We met with the people from Hoxworth and set a date, location and time for the blood drive. We also contacted other local parishes to publish the information in their bulletins. Next, we were able to secure donations from parishioners of St. Jude among others, for a silent auction. It was amazing to see so many friends, family members and teachers give of their time and blood to support a young man they had never met! In the end, we presented the family with over \$250 in gift cards to Kroger's, Dick's, etc. Hoxworth was very appreciative of receiving over 75 units of blood for Matthew and others.

I am pleased to announce that my dad and I will once again hold a blood drive at St. Jude on March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010 to help give the gift of life and hope to others! I hope to see you there!