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When I was younger my parents often talked about Aubrey Rose. My brothers attended school with Spencer and they too would talk about Aubrey. I remember praying for her and her family when we learned she was sick and how sad everyone was when she died.

But Aubrey's parents and what they went through are very inspirational because they never gave up hope and their faith in God. Aubrey was able to teach us a lot in her short time and I have learned that life has many lessons. After reading more about Aubrey I realized for myself that she was a true fighter who never gave up and a person who could spread joy to everyone even if it was just by smiling.

When I was younger I often attended the Transplant Picnics, sponsored by the Aubrey Rose Foundation, in the summer with my family. Hanging out with the kids and playing games, or just pushing them in a swing made me realize that it made them feel like everyone else if only for an afternoon. No shots or needles. Just smiling at the children and offering them "slushies" brought a smile from them instead of feeling scared and uncomfortable. It made me feel good inside that I could help, even in a small way.

This feeling of donating time and bringing smiles to younger kids has been carried on through my life here at St. Al's. One way was by volunteering for a week at Vacation Bible School this past summer. Many of my friends said they thought it was going to be "stupid" and 'a waste of time.' "After all it is summer," they said. But I was eager to fulfill my commitment and part of that was to make a difference. Each day the children came, I was happy to see them and tell about the day's activities we would be sharing. They saw how learning about our faith can be fun and exciting. I could let myself be one of them singing songs and doing the motions too, and no one cared that my voice might crack. Being a role model is something I always wanted to do to help others.

There are other ways I feel I have brightened the lives of other people such as serving a meal at Tender Mercies, running in races to raise money for Cystic Fibrosis and SIDS, and delivering gifts to needy families at Christmas. But I learned that we do not have to do anything big or great to be remembered. The little things we do in life to make others happy, those are the one's that matter the most. Aubrey smiled.