



L&C Plans Rummage Sale to Benefit Pediatric Heart Patient

by Laura Inlow
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GODFREY – Lewis and Clark Community College Nursing faculty and staff are planning the Jensen's Little Heart Rummage Sale, Nov. 5-6, in the Hatheway Cultural Center Gallery to benefit the infant grandson of one of their own, who recently underwent heart surgery.

Jensen Harris is the son of Elyzabeth and Chris Harris, of Bethalto, and grandson of L&C Nursing Professor Tracy Colburn, of Brighton.

Prior to his birth in June, his family found out he would be born with major heart defects. According to Colburn, he has double outlet right ventricle (DORV-DTGA) with a large subpulmonic VSD, severe pulmonary stenosis, mild hypoplastic right ventricle, and tricuspid valve dysfunction.

“This means both the aorta and pulmonary artery are switched and go to the right ventricle, which is smaller than it should be, and there's a hole between the right and left ventricles,” she wrote in the family's GoFundMe, which Colburn set up for the family after her grandson's diagnosis.

Jensen spent the first several weeks of his life at St. Louis Children's Hospital, before getting to come home for a short while. On two separate occasions, though, he stopped breathing, and was admitted to the Cardiac ICU at Children's on Aug. 27, where he has been ever since. On Oct. 14, he underwent extensive cardiac surgery. Colburn said Jensen is the youngest and smallest patient that his surgeon has performed this procedure on.

“Jensen remains in the CICU recovering,” Colburn said. “The surgery lasted over 16 hours. We are anticipating at least another week in the ICU, but he is impressing everybody since his condition and surgery are both unique. He is making his own path, but we just can't wait to get him back home!”

Jensen is 15 weeks old and has been in the ICU for 10 of those weeks. During all of this, Elyzabeth has been unable to work.

“Jensen's father was working two jobs to make ends meet so his mother can be with him, and the family really needs financial assistance to help them get through this,” said Nursing Division Assistant Diane McDonough, who is coordinating the fundraiser event. “In addition to everything else going on, they recently found out that Children's is out of network for their insurance.”

Lewis and Clark is collecting quality donated items to sell. The sale itself will be open to the public for shopping from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 5, and from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 6.

Items will not be priced – shoppers are encouraged to give what they believe the item to be worth, knowing that all funds raised will benefit the Harris family. Anything left over after the sale will be donated to Goodwill.

Anyone with questions can contact McDonough at dmcdonough@lc.edu or (618) 468-4401. A Facebook event has been created with more information at <https://fb.me/e/2uMXXrTki>.

Updates are posted regularly to the family's private Facebook group, Jensen's Journey, which those interested can request to join.

Community members and friends can also donate to Jensen's Little Heart at www.gofundme.com/f/jensens-little-heart, which has raised nearly \$6,800 of its \$80,000 goal as of Oct. 20.