

# Kellsie's Hope Foundation Hosts Final Bad to the Bone Fundraiser for Childhood Cancer Research

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter  
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EDWARDSVILLE - On Saturday, Feb. 24, 2024, Kellsie's Hope Foundation will host their eighth and final Bad to the Bone Party for a Cure.

Starting at 5 p.m. at the Edwardsville Moose Lodge, attendees can enjoy a silent auction, raffles, a catered meal from Fire and Smoke and music by City Heat. All proceeds benefit osteosarcoma research through Kellsie's Hope Foundation, an organization that funds trips and gifts for children with cancer.

“We're just having a party,” explained Dawn Merkel, who organizes the event. “It's very important to us because we lost our son to osteosarcoma in December of 2015. And he, like most kids do, he loved having a good time and he loved food and loved to be around friends and family. So this is our way to celebrate him and do what he really loved to do. It just makes everybody feel good. It's a night just for Sam.”

Merkel started the Bad to the Bone Party for a Cure in honor of her son. Eight years later, this will be the last event so Merkel can focus on her grandchildren and other endeavors, though she said their family will continue to be involved with Kellsie's Hope Foundation and osteosarcoma research.

Over the past eight years, the Bad to the Bone Party for a Cure event has raised over \$200,000 for osteosarcoma research at Washington University School of Medicine. Merkel said they hope to raise another \$30-40,000 at this year's event.

“He was a very good kid,” Merkel said about Sam. “And we just hope that if nothing else, maybe someday there'll be better treatments for other people diagnosed with osteosarcoma.”

Kellsie's Hope Foundation was founded by Kellsie Marchbanks, who was diagnosed with osteosarcoma at age 15. Her family has continued the organization in her honor. They provide support for trips and gifts for children with cancer, including Sam, who traveled to Disney with his family to try all of the restaurants at the park. Merkel said they had a “great time.”

The organization will sponsor the Bad to the Bone Party for a Cure on Feb. 24, 2024. Doors open at 5 p.m., the meal will be served at 6 p.m. and the band will play from 7–10 p.m. You can [purchase tickets online](#) until the end of the day on Feb. 14, 2024, or [donate to Kellsie's Hope Foundation](#) through their [official website at KellsiesHopeFoundation.com](#). You can include a note if you would like your donation to go toward osteosarcoma research specifically.

“I just feel like there's not enough attention brought to childhood cancer,” Merkel said. “Of course, unless that happens to your family or a friend or something, you usually don't realize. But just the awareness that there's a lot of kids out there going through this,

kids and families, and a great way to give them a break is to donate to Kellsie's Hope Foundation. They do wonderful gifts for the kids and trips and help families out in other ways. And it just is really important to us."

**KELLSIE'S HOPE FOUNDATION PRESENTS...**

## **BAD TO THE BONE PARTY FOR A CURE**

IN MEMORY OF SAM MERKEL



**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2024**

**MOOSE LODGE - 7371 MARINE ROAD**

**EDWARDSVILLE, IL - DOORS OPEN 5 P.M.**

**6 P.M. DINNER - BAND 7 - 10 P.M.**

. FIRE AND SMOKE BBQ,  
DK'S FRIED CHICKEN,  
SIDES, BEER, AND SODA



**[HTTPS://EVENTS.HANBID.COM/AUCTIONS/  
BAD-TO-THE-BONE-PARTY-FOR-A-CURE](https://events.hanbid.com/auctions/bad-to-the-bone-party-for-a-cure)**

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**ADULT - \$35**  
**UNDER 21 - \$15**  
**5 AND UNDER - FREE**

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TICKETS IN ADVANCE.  
PRICES INCREASE AFTER  
1/20/24. TICKET SALES  
END 2/14/24.**