

Kelly Schuler,
with her daughter, Lucy



Katy Loves Lucy

*Community Supports Local Girl
as She Battles Cancer*

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When Kelly Schuler used to glance at her refrigerator, she almost felt silly owning a magnet that read, “God will never give you more than you can handle.” She thought her family’s life was picture perfect with three beautiful and healthy children, Ross, Lucy, and Julia. Then in April 2010, Lucy, now almost 3, began suffering severe leg pains and Kelly took her to see the doctor. Following a few weeks of doctor visits, tests, and blood work, the Schuler family received the devastating news that Lucy was suffering from cancer.

Fighting for Lucy

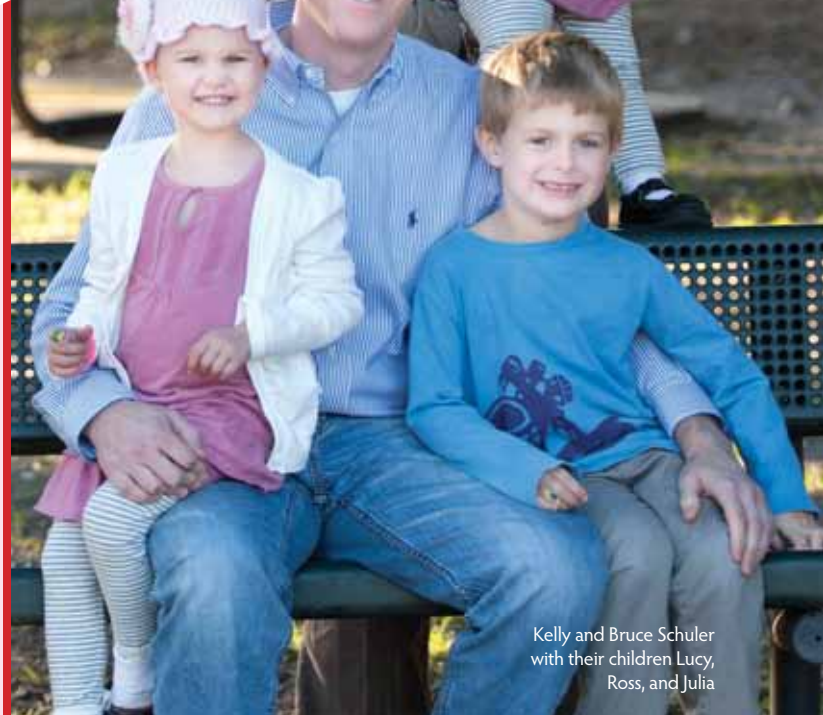
"I pulled off on the side of the road, actually in someone's driveway," Kelly recalls. Because their pediatrician had called almost immediately following an MRI, Kelly and Lucy were still in the car on their way home. Kelly was at a complete loss of what to do. With her husband Bruce at their son's T-ball game, and a sitter at home with their infant daughter, all Kelly could manage to do was get out of the car and scream. It was a day she will never forget. "I was just so mad; mad at God," she says.

"Our strength comes from all those praying and helping us every way possible."

*—Kelly Schuler,
Lucy's mom*



The Schuler family is grateful for the support shown by the Katy community during the I Love Lucy 5K Walk



Kelly and Bruce Schuler with their children Lucy, Ross, and Julia

That anger, shock, and confusion soon turned into a quiet determination to help her young daughter in the fight of her life. Early the next morning, they returned to Texas Children's Hospital to begin Lucy's grueling chemotherapy. It was during that initial inpatient stay when Bruce and Kelly learned of Lucy's specific cancer type, acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL).

ALL is a fast-growing cancer of the white blood cells and is most often diagnosed in children ages 2 to 5. Huge strides have been made in research, which now enable doctors to target the specific cancerous cell with the most effective chemotherapy available. For most ALL patients, the first month of chemotherapy is a "hard and fast" approach with a clear goal of remission. Thankfully, Lucy's little body responded well to the treatment, and while all detectable cancer was eradicated, her articulate, playful, and loving personality remained wholly intact. "Taking care of her baby sister has been one of the many things that has helped her get through this," says Kelly. "She is such a little mom."



Lucy with her aunt Nicole Istre, who helped organize the fundraising 5K walk in Grayson Lakes

Kilpatrick Elementary kindergarten teachers, along with their students, helped raise money for the Snowdrop Foundation in Lucy's honor and collected gift cards to donate to the Schuler family



A Tough Little Cookie

In November, Lucy began her maintenance therapy, which requires a strict schedule of chemotherapy pills, bi-monthly visits to the oncology clinic, spinal taps, anesthesia, and blood work. Possibly the most painful is the visit every three months to remove spinal fluid and replace it with large doses of chemotherapy. "She is one tough little cookie," Kelly muses, recalling the ways Lucy might

silently protest blood draws and shots, all the while holding out her arm to let the nurses proceed. It appears to be something that Lucy understands far beyond her 3 years. Although they hurt, they are making her better, which is the ultimate goal.

Focusing on the present and how far they have come also helps to negate the fear of what lies ahead. "We all have our crosses to bear, but we are still thankful and blessed," says Bruce.

I Love Lucy 5k Walk

In an effort to focus on the blessings of today and also help her family, Lucy's aunt and Kelly's sister Nicole Istre, organized a very special event once Lucy began her maintenance therapy. On Nov. 6, friends and neighbors gathered in the Grayson Lakes community for the I Love Lucy 5K Walk. The Schuler family received an outpouring of love and support from over 150 registered walkers, including strangers who were so moved by Lucy's brave fight.

With items donated by local businesses and even Istre's neighbors pitching in to help, the 5K was a tremendous success. "It was one of those days you will never forget," Kelly remembers. "Kind of like your wedding day. It was just amazing to see all of the people, feel their support, and know that they were all there just for us. It was so emotional." KM

KENZIE STANFIELD is a mother of four and wife to her high school sweetheart Dusty. She enjoys time with her family and friends and documenting life through her family blog.



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