Heart: *in GOD's hand*

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to Cooperstown, NY when invited to play at Dreams Park this past summer. He was a starter for the KMMS wrestling team this past fall. The only restriction the doctors have given Blake in sports is that he can't play full contact football, however after this surgery is behind him he is told he will have no restrictions. He loves the Red Sox and aspires to be a Major Leaguer.

Catcher and second baseman for the Patriots, Blake is an All A's student on the Stingray team at Kings Mountain Middle School. His hobbies off the baseball field include riding his motorcycle and helping his dad around the farm. His last day of school will be May 22, four days before his surgery at Levine Children's Hospital in Charlotte.

Parents, Misty and Chris Broome, are confident surgery will go well. Their faith is strong.

A team of surgeons say Blake is ready for a more permanent heart procedure, his health is excellent, and now is the time.

A cardiovascular ICU nurse for 15 years at CaroMont Regional Medical Center in Gastonia, Misty recently transitioned into a nurse educator position within Critical Care. As a nurse specializing in care of cardiac patients, Misty sees her knowledge as bitter sweet. "It is hard to turn off all you know as a nurse, but in times like this, you have to. I have to just be Momma."

"Hearts Joined for Blake" is the title of the family's Facebook page designed to communicate with local and distant friends and supporters. Blake's story has traveled to several states and he is already on the prayer list of many churches.

The family asks specifically for prayer that a contract will be renewed between Carolinas Health Care System and United Health Care, their insurance provider. On Feb 28, the contract expired, but the two remain in negotiations. As of today, CHCS/Levine is no longer considered "in Network." The family had two options: they could travel several hours for Blake's surgery by a doctor they don't know and a hospital they have never been to OR pay "out of network" costs for the expensive surgery. "No parent wants to make this decision. " You want what is best for your child." Blake has had the same cardiologist since he was born. They do not have peace with changing physicians and say they are trusting in God to provide a way where there seems to be no way. His surgery will take place at Levine's as planned on May 26.

Among Blake's staunch supporters is his brother, Caleb, who he considers one of his best friends. Caleb prays for Blake at every meal and at church, never forgetting that God answers prayers.

Chris and Misty Broome have four children, Blake, 12, Ava, 4, Madison, 7, and Caleb, 10. They live on a farm on Rock House Road in a home they built in 2001.

Their first child, Christopher Blake, was born Oct. 15, 2002 at Cleveland Regional Medical Center. He weighed 7 pounds, seven ounces. Misty had an uncomplicated six hour labor. Because the pre-natal ultrasound could not pick up blood flow, the couple had no warning that something was wrong. Blake was pink and had a hearty cry, nursed and stayed in the room with his Mom the first night. After an abnormal EKG and diagnosis of a heart murmur the day after he was born, Blake was taken by ambulance to Carolinas Medical Center in Charlotte. Misty was released from the hospital, and she and Chris followed closely behind. They spent the first 21 days of Blake's life at CMC. He had a heart catheterization at 5 days old, and had a temporary shunt placed to "buy him some time before having his first big surgery."

BROOME FAMILY – Pictured are Chris Broome, Blake Broome, Ava, Madison, Caleb, and Misty Broome.

At 9 months he had his first open heart surgery and doctors said Blake would make a complete recovery. And by the Grace of God, say his parents, he did just that. He has been healthy with no complications for over 12 years.

Blake enjoys helping his dad, Chris, who doubles as a farmer and a welding technician with AirGas National Welders Supply, raise cattle on their 40-acre farm. He drives a tractor to cut and bale hay, among other things. The family is active in Christian Freedom Baptist Church where Blake is a member of the youth group.

Blake is the grandson of Eddie and Lisa Smith and Dale and Jo Ann Green, all of Kings Mountain, and James and Rebecca Broome of Grover. Other members of the close-knit family are Bella, a miniature Dachshund, and Buddy, a chocolate Lab.

"We refuse to lose our Joy in the Lord by worrying about all of this," Misty says. Philippians 4:6-7 is the verse the Broomes find strength in: "Do not worry about anything, but pray about everything. Let your requests be made known to the Lord and the peace that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" "The Lord will provide, we are confident, and as parents we are ready to get the surgery behind him," Misty said. They ask for prayer.

Most of all the couple credit God for taking care of their son thus far and they are confident He will continue to hold Blake in the palm of His hand.

"What a testimony for Christ Blake will have when all of this is said and done. After all, that's what it's all about."

'Galaxy Quest" family event set March 14 at Gateway Trail

"Galaxy Quest," a fun family event, will be presented by the Cleveland County Astronomical Society on Saturday, March 14, from 6:30-10:30 p.m. at Kings Mountain Gateway Trail. The rain date is Saturday, March 28, from 6:30-10:30 p.m.

Mauney Memorial Library is sponsoring the event and the adventure will begin at the Gateway Trail parking lot with solar viewings and continue up to the Plateau Trail for more as astronomical viewings. Take your flashlight and wear walking shoes.

The Cleveland County Astronomical Society members will share their knowledge and provide telescopes for gazing. The whole family can enjoy the program, reserve your family's celestial outing and sign up at Mauney Memorial Library.

For more information visit: www.kmgatewaytrails.org

Hospice Volunteer Training Class

A Hospice volunteer training class will be held Thursday, March 19, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. or 5:30-9:30 p.m. at Hospice Cleveland County Administration Building in Shelby. The course is free

Playground: *addition is disability-friendly*

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on Cleveland Avenue and an addition to the Murphrey Children's Park.

Murphrey, who grew up in Eastern North Carolina, recalled good memories of spending hours on the playground on the slides and in the swings. Special children will enjoy this playground complex, the mayor said.

"This playground will bring a lot of smiles and happy faces,'' said Hutchins.

"Today is very exciting, children will enjoy this playground,'' said Allen. "Thanks to the mayor and council who led the charge to provide this playground,'' said Holbrook. "This is a special day for the county and for me personally,'' said Falls. He said his role model and uncle Dale Ledbetter, a paraplegic, believed in giving back to his community. "That's what we are doing today,'' he added.

The new addition to the Mayor Rick Murphrey Children's Park is expected to be the place to be this spring and summer for children with special needs. Photo by LIB STEWART

KMH Auxiliary sets jewelry sale

Kings Mountain Hospital Auxiliary will sponsor a Masquerade $5 jewelry sale on Thursday, March 19 from 7 a.m.-6 p.m. and on Friday, March 20, from 7 a.m.-3 p.m. in the lobby of the Carolinas HealthCare System Kings Mountain.. Proceeds benefit the HealthCare Foundation of Cleveland County and Kings Mountain Hospital volunteers.

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