

# Kelsey's Fight

By: Don "Cheese" Akerlow

After reading about Kelsey Christensen I wanted to meet this brave little girl who is facing the biggest battle of her life. You see Kelsey has spinal and brain tumors and she's only 3 years old. We stopped in Jake's in Salem, Oregon, called Scott the owner and longtime friend and met up with Adam (Jake's tech guy) to make sure that the DSL line for the filming November 15 & 16 was compatible. Scott is hosting a fundraiser to benefit Kelsey and help the family with their expenses. Scott called Kelsey's mother, Andrea, who lives in Newberg, Oregon. We were heading to the beach for the Western BCA. We made a detour to



Kelsey's so we could talk to her. We will be filming live via ustream on the internet worldwide. The pool tournament is a fundraiser with a silent auction as the focus.

Kelsey is truly a miracle. Both Kelsey and her twin sister Lacy have the most amazing blue eyes. Kelsey became sick in November of last year. The doctors thought it was just the flu or a virus but she never got over it. Kelsey was sick all the time, throwing up, unable to play, had a rash, and gradually becoming worse. Still the doctors could not find anything. Because of Andrea's persistence and intuition she did not buy into or believe the doctors were getting the whole picture about how sick Kelsey was. She went from doctor to doctor, hospital to hospital and Kelsey was finally diagnosed with a very

rare form of spine and brain cancer. Since then she has had chemo, surgery, blood transfusions, bone marrow tests, MRIs, CAT scans and on and on and on.

The pool community has come together for one of their own to help and lend support to Andrea Christensen and her family while they help Kelsey in the battle for her life. Andrea 26 who has been playing APA leagues since the day she turned 21, and been very involved, more than just a player. Andrea was on the Board of Governors and acted as a ref.

With all that has happened in the billiard industry, pool halls, billiard suppliers closing their doors, it is remarkable and yes, even gratifying to see what is being done by the league players for Andrea. It is like my old football coach said, "When the going gets tough, the tough get going". It is the league

players that have been the most supportive along with the league locations. It is the everyday league player who comes through and gives the time, support and energy that has helped this family. Her friends have seen to it

that Kelsey is taken care of and that Andrea has had some time for herself as well. Her APA family has given her strength, which she has passed along to her four girls.

I saw when talking to Andrea, the strength that she gives Kelsey.

This young woman has shown such incredible fortitude for all of her children. Andrea told me a story of how supportive her friends have been helping her care for Kelsey. Andrea is a very strong person, a single mother, she has the maturity, strength of character and wisdom that some of us never achieve in a lifetime. Her husband, unable to cope with Kelsey's cancer abandoned his family. I cannot help but wonder at how she is able to handle all that has happened to her and her family over this past year. Her children who were full of life, playful and fun-loving are a tribute to her ability to allow them to be children and not be weighted down by all the fear and sorrow that would accompany a diagnosis of cancer for a child so young.

To see Kelsey you would not know that she is fighting for her life. Andrea said that doctors have no prognosis for Kelsey because they didn't expect her to live this long. But there she was full of life, beautiful, innocent and always smiling. I was privileged and moved to be able to meet Kelsey, take some photos of her with her sisters, Lacy (her twin) and Christa. I have uploaded these photos to the internet so that everyone can see Kelsey and her family. You can't help but look at those photos and see what angels they are. The link is [www.onthebreaknews.com/KelseysFight.htm](http://www.onthebreaknews.com/KelseysFight.htm) Andrea has been

journaling about Kelsey's treatments on a website set up for families who are coping with a loved ones critical illness and treatment. You can read all about Kelsey at [www.caringbridge.org](http://www.caringbridge.org) just enter KelseyChristensen (all one word) in the search box.

Join Scott & Judy McComas of Jake's along with Chet Arnett of Sharkey's who will be hosting the APA NW 9-Ball Knockout to raise money in Kelsey's name to help with her family's expenses during her treatment. If you can't make it to the tournament, you can send a donation to the Kelsey Christensen Fund in care of Jake's Bar & Grill, 1686 12th St SE, Salem, OR 97302 or to Randi Lee (APA League Operator) 1420 Cunningham Lane S, Salem, OR 97302.

Let us celebrate Kelsey and learn from her simple love and joy of life, how to really live. She is truly a remarkable child. I was luck to have had the opportunity to meet her and have her love for life touch mine.

**We here at The Break got a hold of Predator Cues. Their generosity was overwhelming. They donated 2 Pink Ribbon cues that will be added to the silent auction valued at about \$300 each.**



# CANCER BENEFIT POOL TOURNAMENT

We, the owners of Jake's Bar and Grill, Sharky's Pool & Brew and the regional APA League Operator (American Poolplayers Association) will be hosting a Benefit Pool Tournament November 15th, 2008 to raise money for the family of three year old Kelsey Christensen, who has been stricken with malignant cancer tumors in the spine and brain that are extremely difficult medically and financially costly to treat.

Kelsey has a twin, and there are two other siblings in the home under the age of five years old. They are the children of Andrea Christensen, an APA member, living in the McMinnville area. Andrea, the sole caregiver of these four children, must provide transportation to Legacy Emmanuel Hospital Cancer Treatment Center in Portland several times a month. There have been surgical procedures as well, with the expectation that there will be more in the future. There is no health insurance in place and the medical expenses are exorbitant.

Our request to you is for donations of cash, gift certificates or goods or services that will be auctioned and/or raffled for cash at the benefit tournament in November.

APA, the single largest pool players association in the world, has readily agreed to sanction this tournament in order to maximize the exposure to the community as a whole.

Please open your hearts and billfolds to this family in need through donations of cash, good or services. All will be well appreciated and tax deductible. Donations of cash in the way of checks made out to: "Kelsey Christensen Fund" can be sent to: Jake's Bar and Grill, 1686 12th St SE, Salem, OR 97302 or Randee Lee (our regional APA League Operator), 1420 Cunningham Lane S, Salem, OR 97302.

To donate good or services, please contact: Scott McComas, owner of Jake's Bar and Grill 503-580-8068 or Chet Arnett, owner of Sharky's Pool & Brew 503-391-4912.



**KELSEY NEEDS  
YOUR HELP**

**SUPPORT THE  
KELSEY CHRISTENSEN CANCER FUND**

**APA NW 9-BALL KNOCKOUT -  
EXTRAVAGANZA with \$2,000  
ADDED**

**4 SEPARATE TOURNAMENTS (3  
SINGLES BOARDS AND 1  
SCOTCH DOUBLES)**

1. You must be a paid APA player active on a Fall Session roster in either 8-Ball or 9-Ball with at least 10 scores of one format or the other on your record prior to playing in these events.
2. The tournaments will take place at both Jake's and Sharky's in Salem on November 15-16 (Sunday league will not be scheduled for play on that Sunday here in Salem.)
3. An "earlybird" entry fee of \$20 a person must come in with an entry form prior to deadline. Any late entries (if openings still exist) will have to pay \$25. All late fees will go to the Kelsey Christensen Cancer Fund.
4. In addition to the four tournaments offered there will be raffle tickets available for all kinds of prizes.
5. The 4 tournaments include a singles

board for skill levels 1 thru 4, a singles board for skill levels 5 & 6, a singles board for skill levels 7 thru 9 and a scotch doubles bracket with a skill level cap of 13 for the pair.

6. Between Scott McComas, owner of Jake's and Chet Arnett, owner of Sharky's a total of **\$2,000 guaranteed will be added** to split between these four events depending on turnout for each bracket. (total of participants in each bracket will determine how much of that award will be added to that event)

7. Each player or scotch team will be called after all entries have come in to let you know which start time and at which location you will be playing, starting on Saturday morning November 15 - so please include legible phone numbers on your entry forms.

8. In the 3 different singles brackets normal 9-Ball skill level races will be played in a full double elimination bracket (only if the turnout is so enormous - race lengths will have to be reduced due to time constraints - but you will know that before you start play.) For the scotch doubles bracket races for the pairs will be according to the list below still a double elimination bracket.

9. Combined skill level 2s - race to 13, 3s - race to 16, 4s - race to 19, 5s - race to 22, 6s - race to 25, 7s - race to 28, 8s - race to 31, 9s - race to 35, 10s - race to 38, 11s - race to 42, 12s - race to 46 and 13s will race to 50

9. Players may only sign up for one event - either singles or scotch as they will be running simultaneously.

10. **Skill levels will be frozen as of November 1st. Early Bird Entry Deadline will be November 8th.** Late entries will be taken up until November 12th unless brackets are already full. Deadline means IN MY HAND by that date (whether in packets, drop boxes or by mail.) Checks may be made out to: Randee Lee, 1420 Cunningham Ln S, Salem, OR 97302 503-362-0133 or 1-800-859-3913