

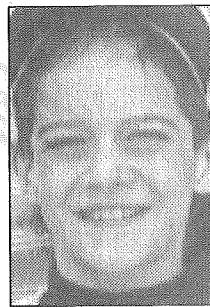
Double lung transplant
patient died Friday Seanlan, Darcy

Hundreds mourn brave youngster Darcy Scanlan

By STEVE PECAR
Staff Reporter

Hundreds of mourners crowded into small Trinity Anglican Church in Streetsville yesterday to pay respects and say goodbye to Darcy Scanlan.

The boy who had fought all of his nine years against cystic fibrosis and underwent a double lung transplant four months ago died Friday afternoon in a Pittsburgh hospital from acute respiratory failure.



SCANLAN

The son of Peel Region Police officer Bill Scanlan and his wife Kim, Darcy's funeral was attended by a police uniformed honor guard, usually reserved for long-serving VIPs, but an appropriate tribute to a boy whose spirit often served to put into perspective the important things in life for those he touched.

Reverend Diana McHardy, who presided over the service, said Darcy was a hero to those who knew him as he carried the burden of his illness so bravely in day-to-day life.

"Every time I saw Darcy he was smiling," said McHardy. "He was a joy-filled boy despite everything."

McHardy said that Darcy had been through a lot in his life, especially during the past four months after he received his new lungs.

"It finally got to the point that he just couldn't take the pain and illness anymore and so he let go," she said.

Other speakers reminisced about the little boy who was just like any other kid but blessed with insight beyond his years.

Family friend Steve Kaszycki said despite their age difference, it was Darcy who often gave him advice to help him cope with adversities of life.

"I learned so much from him," said Kaszycki. "He taught me not to walk away from troubles but to confront them. That is what he did and it was a test of his greatness. He will never be forgotten."

Darcy's newest friend, hockey player Jim Paek of the Pittsburgh Penguins, also spoke at the funeral.

Paek, who visited Darcy at the Pittsburgh Children's Hospital, became fast friends with the boy in the short time they knew each other and even shared the same birthday.

"We knew we were meant to meet," Paek said. "He was my buddy and will always be with me."

Although the biggest concern with transplant patients is rejection of the new organ, Darcy's death was brought on by a bacterial pneumonia. The medication Darcy had to take to combat rejection also reduced his immune system and made him susceptible to infections.

Only Darcy's mother and brother Matthew were able to visit with him in his last days. His father couldn't because he had a cold.

Darcy underwent the transplant operation in August as a life-saving step to fight his chronic cystic fibrosis. He had to go to the United States because no donor lungs were available in Canada.



Photo by Rob Beintema

Bill and Kim Scanlan comfort their son Matthew at the gravesite of his brother Darcy yesterday in Streetsville. Nine-year-old Darcy Scanlan died Friday after succumbing to complications arising out of his lung transplant.