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Neighbors abuzz as fundraiser adds awareness, subtracts hair

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March 5, 2010

By **PATRICK BUTLER** pbutler@pioneerlocal.com

They were still counting the proceeds the day after the "Danny Did" buzz-cut fundraiser Feb. 28 at the Do or Dye Hair Salon, 6005 N. Nina Ave.

So all benefit spokeswoman Mary Duffy knew at that point was that nine stylists gave 320 haircuts during a 5 1/2-hour tribute to 4-year-old Danny Stanton, who died in his sleep Dec. 12 during an epileptic seizure.

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Two of the nine hair stylists who volunteered for the Danny Did fundraiser stay busy as more than 300 adults and children come in for the buzz-cuts benefit Feb. 28 at Norwood Park's Do or Dye salon.

(Photo by Mary Duffy)

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Pioneer Press Staff Writer Pat Butler gets buzzed by Julie Kelley, Do or Dye salon co-owner, during a Feb. 28 fundraiser honoring Danny Stanton, who died late last year while sleeping during an epileptic seizure.

(Photo by Mary Duffy)

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Days after his death Danny's family and their friends organized the Danny Did Foundation to spread the word about the most effective ways for families to prevent epileptic-seizure-related deaths.

During the first three hours alone the stylists had shorn enough hair to fill three plastic garbage bags, Duffy said, noting that the shop was so packed two stylists were cutting away in a broom closet much of the afternoon.

"We had one guy come in from Aurora. Brian Hopkins, a friend of mine from grade school I hadn't seen in 30 years, heard about this and decided to come in and get a buzz cut," said Mike Stanton, Danny's father. "And the son of one of our board members drove in from Minnesota, where he was going to college."

Duffy said: "The entire Loyola Academy basketball team -- about 15 or 20 of them -- showed up." And at least 200 of those who got haircuts were kids, some with little "Danny Did" decal "tatoos."

Duffy, whose son was a buddy of Danny's said not all of them were necessarily from the same school as Danny, who was a preschooler at Create Tivo due to start at

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Pioneer Press Staff Writer Pat Butler gets buzzed by Julie Kelley, Do or Dye salon co-owner, during a Feb. 28 fundraiser honoring Danny Stanton, who died late last year while sleeping during an epileptic seizure. (Photo by Mary Duffy)

Edgebrook next year. "Some were from Queen of All Saints, St. Margaret Mary, Wildwood and what not," Duffy said.

Despite the tragic loss there was nothing melancholy about the buzz benefit, what with kids running around nonstop, getting their haircuts, having a doughnut and grabbing balloons.

"I think there was a real sense of camaraderie among the kids," said Duffy. "You walk out after getting your buzz cut and your buddies have one, too. And you can tell people, 'This is all about Danny. Let me tell you about Danny.'"

Danny's father and others said Danny will be remembered for his love of life and impact on everyone he met, helping elderly neighbors with their groceries, comforting shy children and holding his own at almost any sport.

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Even the name of the foundation came from the final words of the eulogy Mike Stanton gave at Danny's funeral: "Please go out and enjoy your lives. Danny did."

Stanton said he and other foundation members have already been meeting with doctors and executives at Rush, Loyola Medical Center and Children's Memorial Hospital who have been receptive to the idea of better educating parents about SUDEP (Sudden Unexpected Death in Epilepsy).

"And we've even located the device we were looking for -- Emfit," a seizure monitor that alerts parents when their sleeping child might be in trouble," Duffy said.

"Today was such a special day. There wasn't one person who wasn't smiling. This was a perfect way to honor Danny," said Dawn Stanton.

Julie Kelley, one of Do or Dye's co-owners, said: "Today it's a neighborhood of buzz cuts."

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