

FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, 2009

Kate's Kart offers new books to young hospital patients

KENDALLVILLE — Kate's Kart, a program that supplies free books to hospitalized children, has come to Parkview Noble Hospital.

Kate's Kart is a not-for-profit organization founded by Andrew and Krista Layman. The Laymans turned their grief after losing their child into a mission. Their daughter, Katherine Anne "Kate" Layman, was born June 26, 2006. Shortly after her birth, she was diagnosed with serious heart and pulmonary problems.

During numerous hospital stays, "Baby Kate," as she was known to hospital staff, loved to look at books and have books read to her. On Jan. 15, 2008, "Baby Kate" lost her courageous battle at the age of 18 months.

In honor of Kate, and her love of books, the Laymans decided to start a rolling book cart in the pediatric unit of a Fort Wayne hospital. The cart was filled with new books, and children were able to select a book off the cart to keep. The program has expanded from the original hospital to include Parkview Hospital in August 2008, Parkview North in November 2008

and now Parkview Noble. The Layman's have inquiries from other Parkview Hospitals as well as facilities in Muncie and Auburn and they plan to expand to those areas as soon as they can.

"This has helped our healing process," Krista Layman commented, "to see such good things come out of her short life makes things a little easier for us."

Shortly before Christmas, the Laymans delivered a brightly-painted cart, stocked full of books for kids ranging from infants to teenagers, to hospital administration at Parkview Noble. Staff will take the cart around to hospital departments to give books to children who are patients in the hospital and who are having outpatient procedures.

The book carts are painted bright colors and the cart at Parkview Noble is bright yellow with the Kate's Kart logo, and a tree with hearts for leaves, painted on the sides. Baby Kate's four-year-old brother, Seth, designed the logo.

"This is a wonderful addition to caring for our youngest patients," Cathy Byrd, vice president of

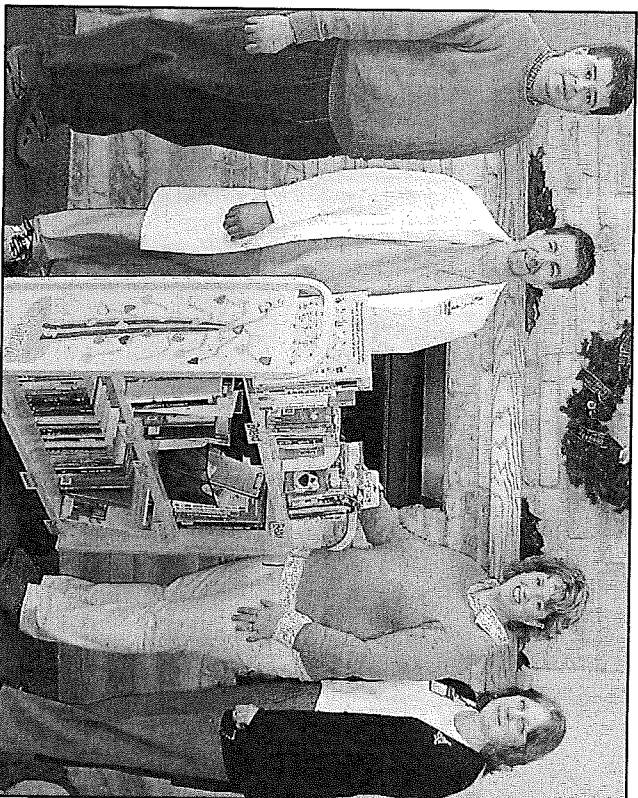


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Young patients at Parkview Noble Hospital are excited to see Kate's Kart rolling through the hallway. Presented here to hospital staff, the brightly colored and well-stocked book cart was delivered recently. Making the presentation were, from left, Andrew Layman,

patient services at Parkview Noble Hospital commented upon receiving the cheerful-looking cart. "So often pediatric

father of "Baby Kate" and founder of Kate's Kart, Greg Hein, manager of Parkview Noble Cardiology department; Krista Layman, "Baby Kate's" mom and founder of Kate's Kart; and Cathy Byrd, vice president of Patient Services at Parkview Noble.

patients are frightened or bored. Having a book to look at or read can help solve those issues," she added.

dedication the Laymans express to this mission is inspiring to our staff. They have taken their tragedy and turned it into a mission to help ease the fears, pain and suffering of other children."

To help keep Kate's Kart stocked, Parkview Noble will accept donations of new books. The Student Council at East Noble High School is organizing a book drive for the very near future. Books may be dropped off in administration, human resources or the front desk of the hospital.

The only requirement is that the books be new. Books needed at all Kate's Kart locations include soft books for newborns, classic read-aloud books, board books, touch-and-feel books, books about princesses or cars, children's books in Spanish, and books for 8-15 year old boys such as sports, world record, strange facts and comic books.

Greg Hein, manager of the Parkview Noble Cardiology department, was instrumental in getting Kate's Kart started at Parkview Noble. He can be reached at 347-78269 for more information.