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Chapter Four
Three Months Old,
Jet Flight To Houston For Eye Surgery

♥ January 17, 2005 at 09:00 AM CST

Blue skies continue,

Good Monday morning everyone. Mondays are busy days around the hospital, and Blake is not an exception to this one. On the schedule for today are his routine echocardiogram, head ultrasound, typical morning x-ray, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and possibly another increase in his feedings. This morning Blake is starting the day with 21 cc's, and a side of 'Binkie'. Yes, Blake is starting to work on a pacifier. 'Going to town on it' seems to be everyone's favorite description of Blake's new fun thing to pass time in the PICU. Check out the latest photos...

We are pleased to share that Blake is five days negative for the latest infection. Cautiously optimistic, we all look for something to 'knock-on' when we share the good news. Another couple of days, and we can all share in Blake's success of overcoming another potentially dire hurdle. Silent thumbs up for now.

Mommy held Blake for the better part on 90 minutes yesterday. Blake fell fast asleep, again see the latest photos. Blake is tolerating touch and movements so much better. Mommy could have held him all day. Here's to many more holdings, and to some 'kangaroo care' in the near future hopefully.

Blue skies over Texas today. Whatever you all have been doing the past week...keep on doing it. Please pray for good results from today's tests, and for steady improvements towards getting off the ventilator in the coming weeks. Continued prayers for all the patients and families in the PICU & NICU. There was a full house in each over the weekend. May the endless blue sky ease slightly the concerned hearts.

Thank you for continuing to follow our 'Reality' drama. Kimberly and I continue to be overwhelmed with everyone's love and concern for Blake. All the positive energy and deeds find there way back to you in time. This we have learned. Thank you all...

Now, get back to work...many thanks.

Daddy

♥ **January 18, 2005 at 08:41 AM CST**

Monday down...

Good Tuesday Morning,

We have nothing but good things to report after a busy Monday for Blake. The echo. results were good, they continue to be very pleased with the results of the pulmonary banding. Physical therapy comes every morning to help stretch and relax Blake's muscles. Blake's there first patient of the day. Mommy held Blake in the afternoon, and then a new assignment came in.....

Blake has been showing steady improvements on the ventilator weaning, and the doctors want to see if he will work a little harder each day to pick up more breaths himself. They call these exercises his 'sprints'. Yesterday, for thirty minutes the R.T. turned down his rate from the ventilator to 15 breaths a minute. To keep up with the oxygen he needs, Blake has to take additional breaths himself. He came through the first test with flying colors. 'Way to go Blake!!!' The doctors will keep this up, and slowly test

him more. This is all moving to a day when Blake will come off the ventilator. That will be a great day.

Blake's feeding are up again to 24 cc's, and they were able to take away the TPN (Gatorade for babies). They are adding extra calories to the breast milk to build his strength and give him energy for those 'sprints'. Pleased to say, Blake is showing us all that he is feeling better.

With that, lift up your cup of coffee, and 'toast' one to Blake...
Here's to more good days ahead. Daddy Out.

Chad

♥ **January 19, 2005 at 08:34 PM CST**

Good Evening, from Mommy,

Well we have had or rather Blake has had an eventful day. The doctors have been wanting to change out Blake's central line in the femoral (groin area). The reason being it is a source of infection and it is not intended to stay in long term. They decided today was the window of opportunity for a new central line, since Blake has had negative cultures since 1/12/05!!!!!! The doctors were trying for a Broviack line. This is a line that starts in the jugular and reaches the heart, well that didn't work out.

The doctor then decided it would be best to try for the femoral vein again, but make it a cut down. The entry starts down at his knee and travels up to his heart. Thank GOD for Dr. Sanchez she was able to place the line after 4 1/2 hours.

It was intense for Chad and I. Of course family and friends were praying and thinking positive thoughts. Thank you!!!

I believe that Blake just wanted a longer field trip out of his room, because he had to go to the O.R. The best thing of all is that Blake remained stable throughout the entire procedure. This boy is such a fighter. I couldn't believe he opened his eyes after returning from the O.R. It was as though he was telling us I'm okay and happy to see you too. I just love this little bundle of joy.

Thank you for your continued prayers!! Just know that the prayers are working.

Please feel free to let us know if you have a prayer request, because this is a powerful prayer chain.

I love you all.

Love,

Kimberly :)

♥ **January 20, 2005 at 08:03 PM CST**

Good Evening from Mommy again,

Blake had a good day today! He starts the day with baby aerobics (P.T.) and then takes a long nap. Next the respiratory therapist made him sprint his lungs, this is when the rate on his ventilator is turned down and he has to breathe over the ventilator. He has done 3 sprints today so far. Go Baby Blake!!! This afternoon Blake had another eye exam to check the progress

of the laser surgery. It showed that the surgery went well. So far the beam of light has worked clear the abnormal blood vessels.

The boy has got to start growing because he is on 30cc of mommy's milk with extra calories and the docs hope to increase the feeds tonight to 35cc/3hrs. Hopefully he will tolerate the feeds. Yum! Yum!

Blake remains to have negative cultures--9 DAYS!!!! Go away Bugs!
We hope to have a great Friday as well. We are looking forward to seeing Aunt Becky, Uncle Michael, Jessica and Gregory on Saturday. Sunday we look forward to Aunt Michelle's visit.

Talk to you soon. Have a wonderful Friday. TGIF!!!!!!!!!!

Love,

Kimberly :)

♥ **January 21, 2005 at 01:31 PM CST**

Good afternoon,

Hello from Mommy. It's been a pretty good morning for Blake, he started his day again with baby aerobics. The doctors rounded on him early this morning. The docs are watching the femoral line very closely, because it looks a little red. Please pray that the line doesn't have to be pulled out. We are hoping it's just angry skin from all the manipulation trying to get the line for 4 1/2 hours. They are starting an additional antibiotic just in case it is infected. Just to be safe--grandma's!

Other news: Blake's vital signs are stable. The docs did stop the sprints for the time being?? Last night his sprint didn't go well, but we think it's because he became too tired. We believe it was too many activities at once for poor little boy. They increase feeds to 35cc, sprint and changing positions all at once was too much for him. The docs re-evaluated his feedings again and changed it to a continuous feeding 12cc/hr. The docs want him to grow, grow, grow, so more calories were added to the mix.

Please pray for all of Blake's organs to recovery from everything he has gone through. I wish you all could see how cute he really is, just look through all the tubes in the pictures. Everyone comments how perfectly round his head is and his facial features.

Just in case you didn't know, tomorrow is Blake's due date. We are going to have a 'Due-date' party. Happy Birthday, Blake!!! We love him so much!

Love,
Kimberly :)

♥ **January 23, 2005 at 08:29 PM CST**

Greetings from Mommy!!

We had an awesome weekend with Blake and the family. Saturday we had our Due date party! It was great! The nurse (Valerie) (thanks for your input Beth) and staff made our day very enjoyable. We were greeted with the room decorated with streamers and a happy due date sign on his glass door. Chad and I picked up a cake from HEB--Happy Due Date Blake!

Valerie brought cupcakes, sprite and cake too. Thank you Gretchen and Luc (NICU nurses) for coming down to celebrate with us.

Our family likes to have parties. Anytime there is a reason to celebrate, we like to party! Just wait until Blake's 1st Birthday!! I've already been planning it in my head. How does Trinity Episcopal gym sound??? Jane, what do you think? We have several months to plan the party. We have over 200 people to invite.

We enjoyed seeing everyone this weekend. The best part of all was Jessica and Gregory coming in Blake's room to visit. Both of them put gown, gloves and mask on to enter the room. They looked like nurse Jessica and doctor Gregory. (Pictures to come on the site). Thank you for coming to see Blake. He knew you were there. Now it's Brooks, Kristen, Chase and Catch's turn. Blake tolerated all the visitors very well. I believe he enjoyed the visit too.

Today he tolerated the sun coming through the windows. It's nice to have a little indirect light in the room, even though we are used to low stimulus.

Well I'll talk to you Monday or Tuesday. Have a good week!!!!

Love,

Kimberly :)

♥ January 25, 2005 at 08:42 AM CST

Mommy's Eyes

Blake definitely has Mommy's brown eyes
Eyes deep with trust, you can not look away
Away they will carry you to a hopeful place
Place your trust in those eyes.

Eyes tell what is in our spirit
Spirit carries us through the hard times
Time moves on around us silently
Silence can at times only express our words.

Words follow the eyes
Eyes see the world and change it
It becomes clear we are seeing a change
Change which begins silently in Mommy's eyes.

(Last night we watched as Blake awakened from his sleep. Something is apparently changing in Blake's mannerisms. We hope this is the beginning of our daily prayers...that Blake is growing healthier. We are starting to see hints that Blake is ready to interact with the world. With his Due Date behind him, maybe he's ready to move on to better days. See latest photo...)

Blessings around us all,
Daddy

♥ **January 28, 2005 at 08:07 AM CST**

Hello everyone- Aunt Becky here. Just a short message this time to let you know Blake has a big week ahead of him. I'm sure his parents will post details as they see fit but I wanted to get to you before the weekend so you could be praying.

Blake will be undergoing surgery again on Monday to place a tracheotomy and g-tube. The purpose of both is to remove tubes from his face. It's clear that he will be on oxygen for a long time due to his lung damage and the trach is the best way to handle that at this time. He also takes milk from a feeding tube in his nose which will be changed to a tube surgically inserted into his stomach. As he learns to feed by mouth the g-tube will become a back up for nourishment.

Kim and Chad have known that these were on the horizon and that both were in Blake's best interest. Kim told me, "he can't come home on the ventilator but he can come home with oxygen support through the trach." Of course, they don't know when that will be at this point.

So as you can see, there are many opportunities ahead for your powerful prayers to have an impact. I hope you have a great weekend and we'll keep you posted.

Love to all-
Aunt Becky

♥ **January 28, 2005 at 10:18 AM CST**

Greetings from Mommy,

Hello to you all. Thank you Becky for posting the message. Last night we went home to pick up Blake's preemie clothes. We decided this weekend was a perfect opportunity to try his clothes on. Chad and I will probably change him every 2 hours. We will take many pictures and post them on the website. Get ready to see Blake finally in clothes.

As you now know, Blake is scheduled for another surgery on Monday. The first surgeon is suppose to start at 2 or 3 pm. It's a Monday, so schedules are usually very busy. The positive thing to remember is that Blake can come home with a trach. He can COME HOME, doesn't that sound GREAT!! This is only temporary. Blake will tell us when it's time to take the trach out. We are hoping the surgeon can put the G-tube (feeding tube in stomach) in by laproscopic surgery, instead of an open abdominal surgery. Blake's abdomen needs to go down in size. This weekend his goal is to sleep, eat and decrease his abdomen. Of course receive lots of LOVE from mommy and daddy. We bought Blake a dresser for his room in the hospital-plastic container with drawers from Target. We will definitely keep you posted. Please PRAY for BABY BLAKE, so surgery is a success. Thank you so much for your support and prayers. We love you all.

Love,

Kimberly:)

P.S. Thank you for praying for me!

Love,

Blake

♥ **January 31, 2005 at 08:08 AM CST**

Good Monday Morning everyone! This is Aunt Becky.

Kim and Chad may post later with more information but I wanted to get this out as quickly as possible. Blake has decided today is not the day for marathon surgery- he is opting for a plane ride instead.

Over the weekend, complications developed with his eyes and he will be transported either today (Monday) or tomorrow by Leer jet to Texas Children's Hospital in Houston for surgery. I don't know all the details about his condition other than it is complicated and came on quickly.

His eye doctor in Austin recommended Houston as the place Blake needed to be for treatment. Because Blake has been stable, this is the perfect window of opportunity to be transported.

Surgery will take place soon on one eye at a time with a weeks rest in between and 3-4 weeks of recovery following both procedures. The prognosis after surgery is VERY unclear so Blake, Kim and Chad are in dire need of your prayers!

As more information becomes available, I'll pass it on. Stay tuned!

Prayerfully,
Aunt Becky

♥ **January 31, 2005 at 12:56 PM CST**

Just a quick update. Blake and Kimberly made it safely to Houston this morning just after 11. Blake did well during transport. Kimberly said he slept the whole way. Chad is driving to Houston and will meet up with them at some point. We do not know yet when his first eye surgery will be. That's all we know for now. More updates soon.

Uncle Michael

♥ **February 01, 2005 at 12:36 PM CST**

Good Afternoon to Blake's Prayer Team,

Kim, Chad and Blake are getting settled in Houston. Mom and Dad are staying at the Ronald McDonald House and Blake is settling in at Texas Children's Hospital.

Blake's first eye surgery is scheduled sometime between 2 and 6pm. His left eye is not as affected as the right so they are going to operate on the left first. This will give it the best chance to have fewer long term problems.

In 3-4 days the plan right now is to operate on the right eye. We will try to post another update this evening after we hear from Grandma Kramr.

Thanks for all the thoughts and prayers,

Uncle Michael

♥February 01, 2005 at 02:07 PM CST

Dear all,

I just spoke with Kim and Chad and little Blake is in surgery right now. Kim said he was awake this morning acting like a 3 month old baby! He was taking naps and waking up looking at mom and dad and like a 3 month old took another nap. Kim says they are very pleased where they are. She said the plane ride was unbelievable.

Although it was raining in Austin, when they got above the clouds the sun was shining. Blake always seems to have good days when the sun is shining. Blake's vent settings were the best they have ever been going in to surgery. Kim and Chad ask for your prayers that Blake will continue to get stronger and continue to do typical 3 month old things!

Kim and Chad's friend,

Lee Ann

♥February 01, 2005 at 09:35 PM CST

Good evening everyone. Aunt Becky here.

Sorry for the delay in getting information to you about Blake's surgery. We heard from Grandma Mary about 3:45 this afternoon. Blake's stats were good during surgery but there were many complicated issues with his eyes that I don't have all the details to expound on. All I know is the

doctor did complete the operation on Blake's left eye and has left the decision up to Kimberly and Chad whether or not to operate on the right eye.

The doc will be in tomorrow morning to check on Blake's recovery and discuss more details then. At this point the doctor said it is reasonable to expect Blake to have some degree of visual impairment.

As you can guess, this is all quite unexpected as Blake seems to have been rocking along lately. But as all of his other bumps in the road, he will persevere. He really needs your prayers for a speedy recovery and to continue growing. And while you're praying, Kim and Chad need your prayers to help guide them through some tough decisions in the following days and weeks.

Until next time-
Aunt Becky

♥February 02, 2005 at 12:14 PM CST

Good morning All

Thank you for helping Blake, Chad and I all arrive to Houston safely. The surgery did not go as well as we hoped. The left eye only was operated on yesterday, because the doctor believed it wasn't detached. After the doctor checked him in the O.R. both of the eyes had retinal detachment, unfortunately. The doctor tried everything possible and was unsuccessful. He didn't think operating on the right eye would do much good for Blake. He did ask Chad and I if we wanted to operate, but we agreed with the

MD. The doctor did state that sometimes infants surprise him after they grow and mature. There is a very slight chance he could have a small amount of vision. At this point he does not believe he will have vision at all.

This is the most difficult email I have ever had to write. Please don't give up on prayer, because it is still working. The doctors here at TX Children's are surprised how low his ventilator settings have become (which is a good thing). They are thinking of trying to remove the tube, maybe even next week. At least they will try it and see how Blake responds. We have to get him fattened up first. Please pray that he will successfully be extubated. It would be so amazing to us if he didn't have to endure the trach. Please pray.

Please pray for Chad on his many trips back and forth to Houston and Austin. It's not an easy trip. Thank you.

I love you all. We will try to keep you informed as much as possible.

Love,

Kimberly & Chad :)

♥ **February 03, 2005 at 09:27 AM CST**

Warm greeting to everyone,

Good Morning from Austin...Chad here, back to work a few days before getting back to Houston this weekend. Grampa Kramr came along for the ride and will return with me tomorrow. We are so very fortunate to be

blessed with such a loving and supportive family. Kimberly, Blake, and I will never be able to express enough how much love we feel for you all. You have all been our crutches. Keeping us supported through the good and the bad days.

Though we are still coming to understandings as to the recent developments with Blake loss of sight due to the aggressive Retinopathy of Pre-maturity (ROP), we must look to the future. Blake has never once stopped his fight for life, and continues to amaze us as to his will. We now must focus on his lungs and breathing. The doctors in Houston are optimistic that Blake is ready for an attempt at weaning from the ventilator. A few more days of feeding, growing and getting settled in his new surroundings and the doctor's will start testing Blake's ability to move off the ventilator. Prayer's of strength for our little boy...

I'll try to put more information out for everyone as throughout the next couple of days. Daddy misses his little boy already and sends love to Mommy. Gotta go....

Photos of Blake's trip to Houston coming soon.

Love and Thanks to you All.

Daddy

♥February 04, 2005 at 08:51 AM CST

Greetings Blake-Bunch,

Friday morning already...where does the time go?

Mommy called with good news this morning, Blake topped the 5 lbs. mark yesterday and is not looking back. He continues to do well with his feedings, and Mommy is adding as much milk to the formula diet he has started. We are hoping to get more donor milk from the milk bank in Austin, but for now Blake is adjusting well to some formula.

Blake has also found his mouth. Yes, I know...it's the little things. Blake has begun to place his fingers in his mouth and is touching his face. Big developmental step for him. Since he has lived with the breathing tube in his mouth for so long, that he finds enjoyable sensations with his mouth is a very good step.

Mommy loved the night nurse the past two nights, and has been able to rest easier knowing Blake was in good hands. He has had a couple of spit-ups the last day, but I think he is just starting to show us that he wants to be like his friend Adam.

Blake sends 'Hello's' to all his friends in Austin, especially all the nurses and doctors who miss him so. Aunt Janice, please forward to the PICU staff that Blake and Mommy/Daddy misses everyone. We will see what the next weeks hold for us. Daddy will most likely stop by to give updates as he waits for the weekends to come to be in Houston.

Let's hope the coming rainy days pass us by with only good developments for Blake. As we found out Monday...there is always sunshine above the clouds, you just have to know the rain is temporary.

Patience reveals the light.
Good day, and Super Weekend.

Daddy

♥ **February 04, 2005 at 08:57 AM CST**

Send Blake a message:

You can send Blake a message right to his room by using this url:
www.texaschildrenshospital.org/Parents/PatientGreeting/Default.aspx
The Volunteer staff will print and deliver your emailed messages.

Have a Great Weekend,
Aunt Becky

♥ **February 07, 2005 at 10:17 AM CST**

Monday Greetings,

A quick 'Blake-Note' to you all...today starts a new chapter for Blake. We are expecting Dr. Fernandez to start Blake with some pressure-assistance trials, meaning they will reduce the ventilator pressure settings slightly to test Blake's ability to work a little harder to pull air into his lungs himself.

Of course they will start ever so slightly and watch how Blake handles the changes. Good luck son...we know you can do it!

Daddy got off to a slow start back from Houston last night. As if it wasn't hard enough to leave Kimberly & Blake; Daddy discovered a screw head pointing out of his front passenger tire. As if we were at Daytona... Mr. Kramr, Mr. Routh and myself changed out the tire right there at the drop-off zone in front of the hospital. I don't think we set any records, but we got the full-sized spare on in +/- 20 minutes. That put Daddy back on the road, and in Austin late last night. I was glad to have spotted the screw before I headed out, and not as I was along I-10. Something made me look down and spot it...thanks for your continued prayers for safe travel.

Blake is looking the best he has ever looked. Our boy is turning the corner. We will keep hope that in the future, doctors will be able to reverse his blindness...but for now, we will strive for Blake as a whole. He is receiving so much love and strength from you all. Blake's nurse last night commented that she has never cared for such a calm gently baby. Now that he is off of all the sedation medicines and antibiotics, we are seeing Blake for himself. What a beautiful little boy!

Keep hope in your hearts...
Best wishes to a good week.

Hugs and kisses to Mommy and Blake.

Love,

Daddy

♥February 07, 2005 at 11:39 AM CST

Greetings from Houston,

Sorry I haven't been writing, but I've been a little busy riding ambulances, a jet and wondering around the hospital. It is a large facility. I was a little disoriented the first couple of days. It is a city within a city. I still can't believe a week ago we were on a jet. I haven't had a chance to tell everyone about the experience.

Once again Blake has amazed me. He traveled from ambulance to jet back to ambulance at Hobby airport WITHOUT sedation. You heard me--I couldn't believe it. I asked the nurse that I should get Blake's sedation while on the jet. It actually was a very smooth ride. The best part was seeing the sun above the clouds. I knew that the trip would end just fine.

I forgot to tell you this morning, Chad Blake grew a little more--5lb 6.4 oz. Grandma Johnson helped me with Blake's diaper this morning. Blake decided to give her a present as soon as she placed it under him. We all laughed. I think he grinned at Grandma.

He hit another milestone this morning (Don't worry daddy I took pictures) Blake is holding the pacifier in his mouth!!!!!!!!!!!!!! I am so glad to see him act like a newborn. The doctors are not ordering many test on him or x-rays, unless absolutely necessary. Blake is finally able to just REST and EAT! The first pressure support trial as Chad discussed it about to occur. GO BLAKE GO!!! We know you can do it. The trial will be a very slowwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwww process. I'm so happy the docs feel as though he is ready to try to breathe on his own. We will HOPE for a good trial and just see what our son can do on his own. I will let you all know later.

I want to thank my family and friends for being so supportive of us during this difficult transition. Don't worry I am eating and drinking lots of fluids. I want to thank the family for bringing us food on Sat. I want to wish Mike & Aunt Carolyn a Happy Belated Birthday!! I also want to wish Brooks a Happy 11th Birthday tomorrow!!!!
I will talk to you all soon.

Love,
Kimberly :)

P.S. Blake whispered to me this morning: I love my daddy!!

♥ **February 07, 2005 at 02:03 PM CST**

Way to Go Blake,

Mommy just called...Blake completed his first test with flying colors. Dr. Fernandes turned off the Rate support for two hours. Meaning Blake would have to initiate all his own breaths himself. The ventilator follows with pressure support to complete the breath, but Blake must start all the breaths. Small steps, but huge in the slow process of moving him off the ventilator. The settings have been returned to their pre-test settings until tomorrow's round.

Mommy was filled with amazement and relief. Way to go Blake!!!!

Daddy

♥ February 09, 2005 at 05:39 PM CST

Three Days in a Row...

Blake went 4 hours today on the pressure-assistance test. Mommy was so proud of him. Way to go Blake! What surprised Kim most was that Blake continued to stay awake for the rest of the afternoon. She was sure he would need a nap right afterwards, but not our boy...he kept alert for the rest of the afternoon. All good signs that he is getting stronger.

Latest weighing puts Blake at 5 lbs. 7.5 ounces (chunky boy). Blake loves his milk and is going through the reserves Daddy brought from Austin. We think he gets his appetite from the Grandpas. For the most part, Blake is a feeder/grower working to get off the ventilator. Doctor's are more confident each day that Blake will be able to do it.

Kimberly and Grandma Johnson have been invited to cousin Lee Ann & Brian's (House of Payne) for dinner tonight. Daddy is so glad they can get out of the hospital for a real meal...knowing that Blake is in good hands with his night nurse Sandra. Good nurses make all the difference. Thanks Lee Ann & Brian.

We really appreciate everyone's continued prayers and messages of support. I look forward to days when you all get to see Blake out of the hospital. He is so loved.

Good Night Son,
All Daddy's love, I'll be there soon.

Daddy

♥February 10, 2005 at 02:39 PM CST

Hello everyone. I actually have a little time to send a message today, because the grandma's are babysitting. Blake is actually in the middle of a pressure support trial as I type. The doctor increased the trial to 8 HOURS. Yes, I was shocked, too. Blake is breathing very well by himself.

It is great to watch him suck his pacifier or his fingers. Daddy, he started sucking his thumb today! He is finally acting like any other newborn. I just love him! Blake & I can't wait to see you, Chad. Please be careful driving.

Thank you for your continued prayers and thoughts. PRAYER is working!

Love,

Kimberly & Blake :)

♥February 11, 2005 at 08:20 AM CST

Friday Report...

I know it helps to get an update for all you Blake addicts, myself included...so here it goes. For the last week, Mommy's first words have been "He's doing great..." Sometimes I'm almost afraid to post such good news, because things can/have changed so dramatically in a matter of hours sometimes. But Fridays are supposed to be 'feel good' days , so how about a shot of good news.

Blake sustained an 8 hour trial yesterday initiating his own breaths. He has not showed the doctors any reason for not moving forward with their plans to wean him from the ventilator. We should all pray for Blake next week as they may take even bigger steps forward.

Mommy is totally in love with our little boy. You should hear her voice each day as she brags of his progress. Daddy is too of course, but Mommy loves Blake so. She is standing strong by his side in Houston, and Daddy can't wait to be there tonight.

Blake has turned the corner on many of his previous concerns: no sedation meds., no antibiotics, and fewer blood/platelet transfusions. Blake really resembles a growing newborn these days. Remember he started into this world at 1 lb. 6 oz. His is a successful story, *"please God, continue to bless and watch over our son and those caregivers directing his care."*

I've heard this comment from mothers before and could not relate... "I could just eat him/her up..." Funny expression to hear, but understandable when you are totally captivated with your baby. Blake, don't worry...your Mommy is not going to eat you, but she might hold you a little too tight or stare at you for hours while you sleep. Mommies are very special. Take note of this everyone, as Valentine's Day approaches. Chocolate is better for Mommy's, otherwise your children may lose an ear or something!?!

Please be safe this weekend, and keep the prayer wave going. Blake is riding the wave...

Best Wishes to you and your families,
Daddy

♥February 13, 2005 at 02:42 PM CST

Good Afternoon,

Blake is so happy his daddy is here. I am taking a break, so daddy and son are bonding. Blake is amazing everyone here, he completed an 18 hour trial yesterday!!!! It ended at 4am and restarted at 8 am. We haven't heard of how long the marathon will last today. The doctor has not rounded on him yet. I was told Blake is a "boring patient," so he will be rounded on last. I am glad Blake is finally a boring patient. Chad and I are feeling more secure changing and repositioning Blake alone. Thank you CHOA NICU and PICU for the hands on training. Last night we enjoyed watching the nurse give Blake a bath. Blake enjoyed the massage.

I want to thank everyone for all the support and positive vibes that we are feeling! I love each and every one of you. Please continue to pray that Blake can breathe on his own. The doctors may try to extubate Blake this week if Blake is ready. The stars and moon must be in line also.

Have a wonderful week! Happy Valentine's Day!!!

Love,

Kimberly :)

♥February 14, 2005 at 01:42 PM CST

Good Day Everyone,

Love is in the air today...take time to wish those you love how much you care for them. Heart felt words are more meaningful than 'a box of chocolates'. But as we've mentioned, chocolate has its place too.

I want to share a Valentine wish with you all. I learned today that our good friend Bruce has made this weekend one to remember. For all of you that do not know Bruce, he is a very special friend of Kimberly and mine. I don't think Bruce would mind me saying, that he has been looking for a special person for some time now. He may have wondered a time or two if that special person existed. Bruce is one of those guys who often puts others before himself and will at any time drop what he is doing to help a friend out. His sense of humor and thoughtful ways endeared Bruce to Kimberly and I right away. I found out today that Bruce proposed to his girlfriend Dona and she accepted. Woowwwwwww!!!

Though Kimberly may try to take some of the credit for introducing them to each other, I think we all know that these two souls were waiting for each other...and they were bound to meet. We wish the two of them all the best in life together.

Blake will be so excited to hear the news about Uncle Bruce. This was a great weekend for Blake. Last night he went 24 hours and beyond for his pressure support test. Beyond.... He is still being assisted by the ventilator, but we are moving toward a big step. If he continues to do so well, the doctors will be talking about extubating him later this week potentially. We'll share the plan as we get it. Go Blake, Go!!!

Mommy and Daddy love our son so... It was a great way to celebrate Valentine's weekend, sharing the day with our son. He is growing and getting stronger each day. As you heard, he is one of the last to be rounded on and one of the easier babies to care for at the moment. He has come so far...he was for many days in his life, the most critical patient in the unit. Let's keep those days behind us...along with any infections.

I wouldn't be following my own advise if I didn't express some heart felt words for my wife. Kimberly, you are the heart beat of our family...and my true love in life. Without you, I would not see the world the same way. Everyone that meets you just once, knows that you see within each of us. You are the most caring spirit I've ever met. I love you dearly ,and know how fortunate I am that you are there to share life's experiences with. For better or worse...In sickness and in health. I love you always.

Best Wishes to you All,

Chad

