



# The Mokena MESSENGER

Join Andrew's team and help "strike out cancer"  
by Joseph Hillenmeyer

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It's one, two, five years and it's gone. On May 3, 2008 Andrew Bieniek, 8, of Mokena officially beat cancer and is celebrating his fifth year of remission. To celebrate Andrew (a huge baseball and White Sox fan) "striking out cancer," a fundraiser will be held at the Pipe Fitters Training Center in Mokena on June 7 for Hope Memorial Pediatric Cancer Center in Oak Lawn.



Andrew Bieniek, 8, of Mokena.

Put together by Andrew's mother, Vickie Bieniek and Grant Seekers, a development firm in Mokena that raises funds for not-for-profits, the goal of the fundraiser is to put the proceeds towards a blanket warming cabinet at Hope Memorial.

"Originally I was just going to throw a little party for Andrew and have people bring presents that could be donated to the hospital," said Bieniek, who has lived in Mokena most of her life. She said that all changed after she started talking with Tammy Leonard, president of Grant Seekers.



Andrew Bieniek and friends.

"She is the core of this," said Bieniek, "I couldn't have done it without her. She got me through all the necessary paperwork to become a not-for-profit and this whole thing has really exploded."

Bieniek said that the blanket warmer is something that she believes will be a real benefit to the Pediatric Cancer Center.

"It's something that would have made a huge difference when Andrew was going through treatment, said Bieneik. "Some (of the medicines and treatments) made him very cold; we were piling blankets up on him and even laying on top of him. It sounds like a little gift, but it's huge."

According to Bieneik, a blanket warmer will cost around \$8,000. Additional proceeds will go towards buying toys and board games for the children at the hospital.



Bieniek and company at a White Sox game.

Bieneik said that before her son was diagnosed, he was

"painfully" shy, and became even more so after he began his treatment for the cancer. Now he is like a different kid.

"He is so out going and just a ball of energy--which most of the time is a good thing," said Bieneik. "He has also become one of the most sincere and empathetic kids I have ever met in my life. He hates to see others hurt."

Andrew is the oldest of four children; Lizzy, 7, Nicky 5, Danny, 3.

She added that Andrew is always asking "what can we do" to help someone else.

If you want to help Andrew strike out cancer, then attend the fundraiser on June 7 at the Pipe Fitters Training Center, 10850 W. 187th St., Mokena. The Pipe Fitters are donating the use of their facility for the event.

Tickets will be \$30 for adults and \$15 for children. The family event will feature a grand raffle, with the chance to win \$1,000, \$500 or \$250 in addition to silent auctions. Food is included in the price of admission and drinks will be available for a minimal charge.

Kids will be able to play different types of games where they can win prizes and will also be able to go on a pony ride. The event will run from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

*For tickets and more information, visit [www.forandrew.org](http://www.forandrew.org).*



Bieneik at Disney World.



U.S. Cellular Field.