

Longview teen's birthday bash to raise money for Children's Cancer Association

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By [Leila Summers](#)

A Longview teen battling a rare form of cancer is raising money for the Children's Cancer Association at his 16th birthday bash at the Monticello Hotel on Friday.

Sherod Nichols, an R.A. Long High School freshman last year [who inspired the football team](#), was diagnosed with Neurofibromatosis 1 (NF) — a genetic disorder that causes tumors — at 4 months old, but only last spring did it turn to cancer, said his mother Karinsa Viramontes.

By the time doctors detected the cancer, called malignant peripheral nerve sheath tumor (MPNST), it had already spread to his lower pelvic, abdomen and lymph nodes, she said. Sherod completed seven months of chemotherapy in February, but stopped because the cancer continued growing, his mother said.

“With him not being able to go to school this year, this birthday party would give a chance for all of his friends, all of his family to see him,” she said. “And it’s all going to a good cause.”

“We know this will probably be our last birthday with him,” Viramontes said, noting that doctors are now mostly working on “pain management for him.”

Viramontes said she and Sherod decided to open the party to the public after receiving word the Monticello Hotel offered to donate their ballroom to the cause. A local disc jockey has volunteered to play music, she said.

The event also will feature food, beverages and a Charleston dance contest, Viramontes said.

Tickets cost \$20 each or \$30 per couple; friends of Sherods were given free tickets and are encouraged to bring an unwrapped gift that will be donated to the Children's Cancer Association.

Last fall, Nichols became well known at R.A. Long for his devotion as manager of the school's football team. Sherod cheered the team from the sidelines and blew a foghorn during practices.

In return, team members invited Sherod to sit at their lunch table, gave him a special team jersey and the honor of calling the coin toss during last year's Civil War game against Mark Morris High School.

Like most 16 year olds, Sherod told his mom he wanted a car for his birthday, but he's settled for the opportunity to arrive at his big party in a flashy 1933 Ford Coup.

“He wanted a car, then it got to the point where he was like ‘you know what, I would settle for a really good pair of legs that don't hurt, that just get me around,’ ” Viramontes said. “Now it's like,

'Mom, I just want to do something to help other people out.' ”

Party for a cause

Tickets to attend Sherod's Birthday Bash, which is Friday from 7 to 11 p.m., are available at: the Monticello Hotel front desk, Salon 21 (inside the Monticello Hotel), and Kerr Car Care Quality Muffler in West Kelso. Cost: \$20 for a single; \$30 per couple. All proceeds will be donated to the Children's Cancer Association.

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