

## **"I am alive today thanks to blood donors."**

When she was 10 years old, Kristin was an active and energetic girl. That's why her mother, Karen, was concerned when Kristin became so exhausted that all she could do was go to school and sleep. At first, she thought it was the flu. When it lasted for several weeks, doctors in Wickenburg recommended they visit a pediatrician in Phoenix.

A bone marrow test showed that Kristin had acute myelogenous leukemia, a quickly progressing disease in which too many immature cells are found in the blood and bone marrow. She was admitted to Phoenix Children's Hospital to begin chemotherapy. Several blood and platelet transfusions helped keep Kristin strong enough to maintain her treatment schedule, the key to success in treating cancer. After several complications, Kristin received her last chemotherapy treatment eight months later, in August of 1998.



However, in December, Kristin suffered a relapse. More complications followed, like fungal sinus and ankle infections and even an unusual growth on her arm that had to be surgically removed. Doctors then began looking for a bone marrow donor for Kristin. No one in her family was a perfect match, so they turned to the National Marrow Donor Registry. Fortunately for Kristin, more than 300 people were matches, including three that matched on all six human leukocyte antigen tests.

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She was strong enough to return to Wickenburg in August 1999. She joined her classmates at Vulture Peak Middle School and went on to Wickenburg High School. In high school, she played varsity tennis, performed in "Guys and Dolls" and served in Student Council.

"Blood donors saved my life," Kristin said. "I have many things I want to pursue and goals I want to accomplish. Thanks to them, I have the chance to live out my dreams."

Kristin was married in September 2008, and she and her husband, Brian, make their home in Surprise.