

## My Amazing Papaw

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My Papaw was one in a million. It was literally like my Papaw and I were peanut butter and jelly. It all began when my Papaw started babysitting me at just four months old. He would stay two nights in a row just to watch me! My Papaw lived an hour and a half away, but that didn't change anything about our relationship.

When I was nine months old, my Papaw had prostate cancer. He went into a-fib after surgery. He had to stay in the ICU for a few days. He had lifting restrictions but that didn't stop him from coming to babysit me. My Mom would set everything up on the floor, a portable high chair, a changing pad, and a play area. There was one time when my Papaw laid me down on the couch so he could use the bathroom, and when he came back I had fallen off the couch! I was lying on the floor giggling.

Later on, my Papaw had multiple cancers, colon cancer, CLL leukemia, and in the summer of 2016 my Papaw even had a mild heart attack. My Mimi and Papaw had a pool at their house and he was taking it out whenever he had a heart attack. Thankfully he recovered great! In October of 2017 we found out my Papaw had CLL leukemia. But he still came to see me in my play at school, The Little Mermaid. I also broke my foot around this time and he came to my appointment that I got my cast on, and he offered to carry me to the car!

In summer of 2018, we had a blast at my Mimi and Papaw's house. Whenever we first got there he told us that his hip was really bothering him. So, we got heating pads for him, ice packs, and even covered him up with blankets. My Mom had to go home for a little while (an hour and a half away) and my sister, Lorelei, and I stayed the week. I could hear people walking

around at night, so I went out to the living room to see who it was and my Papaw said he couldn't sleep. Then he repeatedly started getting headaches and cold chills. We thought he was probably just sick from being around a lot of kids from volunteering at Vacation Bible School the week before. He went to the doctor and they told my Papaw that he just had pneumonia. He didn't get much better and needed to rest and sleep all day. We left a few days later to go to Florida for vacation. He was told to go to the hospital in Indianapolis. So, my Mimi called the hospital and an ambulance came to pick him up and took my Papaw there. We stopped in Alabama to go to a space museum, because we knew my Papaw was in the hospital. My Mimi told us to just stay there for a while so we did. Then whenever my sisters went to go ride a ride with my Dad, I stayed with my Mom. We were told that he was going to need to have special treatment for acute leukemia.

We immediately turned around and started driving to Indianapolis. We were all very tired so my Mom's friend, Jodi, came to pick her up at a Cracker Barrel and drive her to Indianapolis. My sisters, Dad, and I all went home to get some sleep. The next day we found out that my Papaw had to stay in the hospital for a month! On August 3<sup>rd</sup>, I went to my friend's house to spend the night. Whenever my Dad picked me up he told me, "The doctors have some important news to tell us about Papaw and you will go to the Lane's house." I immediately said, "No, I'm going with you." So, I went with my parents to the Indianapolis hospital and my sisters went to our friend's house. My whole family was in the hospital room with the doctors. The doctor said, "He's just not recovering. So, we need to think about sending him home or whether to discontinue treatment." My Papaw was sent home August 6<sup>th</sup>. We took off school on August 8<sup>th</sup> to go see him. The next day, we went back to school, but my Dad had to pick us up early because the doctors who were visiting him told us that my Papaw wouldn't make it through the night. My

Papaw passed away that night. He made such an impact on me. I remember whenever we would sit down at the family dinner table and I would always ask him to tell me stories, and he would! Whenever we would play outside, he had a very special swing that he would sit on and watch us play, and sometimes even play with us! Every time we went up to my Mimi and Papaw's house my Papaw would take us to McDonalds and get us breakfast and smoothies. At his house, he would always be sitting in his special rocking chair watching his old cowboy shows. My Papaw would teach me about Jesus! We always took a very special family trip over the summer to Holiday World. After we would ride the HoliDog, my Papaw and I would sit on a bench, talk and take a picture. There was this ride there called "Turkey Shoot" where you would try and hit the target on the turkey and me and my Papaw would compete on it. In the fall, we would take a camping trip to my Papaw's favorite campsite, Starve Hollow. We would ride our bikes, make campfires and more. It was so much fun! And my Papaw was so positive about everything! He told me before he passed away, "I fought a good fight. I'm healed." This is why my Papaw was and will always be one in a million.