



Daniel, Lori and
Hayden Buckfire

The daughter of Dr. Joel Haber and Arlene Haber, Lori grew up in Bloomfield Township with her brother, Bradley, and attended Bloomfield Hills Andover High School. After graduation, she attended Arizona State University in Phoenix, where she graduated with a degree in art.

Joel Haber was diagnosed with a rare melanoma cancer in May 2009, and learned the severity of his illness as he accompanied Lori on one of her many chemotherapy treatments. Joel passed away in April 2010, three months before his daughter.

Lori's battle with cancer was covered by the *Detroit Jewish News* in May 2007, two years after her diagnosis. In that story, Buckfire spoke of the American Cancer Society's annual Relay for Life, saying of the event that "it is elating to know I'll be part of the camaraderie of people getting together for such a good cause." Her family is hoping to do the same now in her memory to help others who have been affected by this disease.

For more information on the event or the Lori Haber Buckfire Foundation, or to order a book/poster, visit www.planetlori.com or email Daniel Buckfire at daniel@buckfirelaw.com. □

Alison Schwartz is the vice president of CKK Agency.

Lori's Legacy

New book and charitable foundation celebrate the life of a young mother who lost her battle with ovarian cancer.

Alison Schwartz

Special to the Jewish News

It was an unthinkable diagnosis. Just eight weeks after the birth of her first child, Lori Haber Buckfire of Bloomfield Hills was given the devastating news in May 2005 that she had Stage IV ovarian cancer. At age 36, what should have been the most joyous time of her life as a new wife and mother became the start of a five-year medical journey involving multiple surgeries and seemingly endless rounds of chemotherapy.

Although Lori knew her long-term prognosis was not good, she approached life as any young mom would, taking the attention off of herself to focus on her family and making sure her son, Hayden, was happy. She marked each of Hayden's birthdays with a letter penned to him and spoke often of her hope to be able to take him by the hand to his first day of kindergarten. Sadly, Lori died six weeks before she was able to do so, in July 2010, at age 41.

"Throughout Lori's five-year battle with ovarian cancer, she chose not to be defined by the disease," said her husband, Daniel Buckfire, 46. "Each struggle filled with pain and fear was answered by joy, hope, courage and the will to make every good

moment last."

For her family and friends though, Lori's memory, talent and spirit live on in a new book published in her honor. *The Best of Times*, the title Lori had picked out for the book she hoped to one day write, has now been written in Lori's own words from her emails and her blog, which she started after her diagnosis so that family and friends could keep updated on how she was doing. The book is illustrated with her own original artwork and personal photographs. It was put together by Lori's husband and graphic designer Laurie Blume.

The book will debut at the inaugural fundraising event of the Lori Haber Buckfire Foundation to be held at the Janice Charach Art Gallery in the Jewish Community Center (6600 W. Maple Road, West Bloomfield) on Saturday, Sept. 21, from 7-10 p.m. *The Best of Times*, in addition to posters of Lori's original artwork, will be available for purchase.

Funds raised will provide support for the Planet Lori Art Camp at the Birmingham Bloomfield Art Center (BBAC) for children who have or had a parent with cancer. Lori loved children and spent many afternoons doing art projects with her son Hayden (now 8). Art is often used to help children communicate,



overcome stress and heal from tragedy. Funds will also be used for ovarian cancer research and education, and for BRCA gene awareness.

"The family's publication of the book is our way of ensuring that Hayden knows how precious the time was that he and his mother had together and that he never loses the love they shared for one another," Daniel says. "The book fulfills Lori's wish to always celebrate the best of times."

The Best of Times

This excerpt is written in exactly Lori's style:

"one thing that i learned early on in my cancer diagnosis is that life goes on. its strange, but I got used to it. i used to wonder how all of these people walking by me could go on with their seemingly normal lives when i had cancer. i recall a nurse, upon when asking me how i was doing, smiled at my response. i told her that i was so busy with my kid and the rest of my life that i kept forgetting that i have my cancer to deal with. She was smiling, because, as she said, 'thats how its supposed to be.' thats when I realized that, duh! ... life does go on! And I wouldnt want it any other way. Because why would i want to fight so hard for my life, if i were only going to waste time worrying about living, and not actually LIVING it! what would be the point of adding extra years on to my life if i were going to be miserable during those extra years? doesn't it make more sense to enjoy it? im not the most practical or brilliant person who ever walked this earth, and even i know this!"

— Lori Haber Buckfire