

A Bone Marrow Match Is Found for Pat Harris

By George Linkletter

Sherman resident Pat Harris has received word that a suitable bone marrow donor has been located. He is now is undergoing treatment in New Milford Hospital, prior to receiving the much needed bone marrow transfusion, and is reported to be “in very good spirits.”

Mr. Harris is a father of three and suffers from a condition called myelodysplasia syndrome. MDS is an environmentally induced illness, which his doctors say will eventually advance into acute myeloid leukemia.

He was also the intended beneficiary of an ambitious Town-wide drive, sponsored last March by the Sherman Volunteer Fire Dept., to attract possible bone marrow donors. More than 350 residents and others responded to the SVFD appeal and signed up to become bone marrow donors.

His situation was also complicated by his unique heritage: he of is German, Irish and Cherokee Indian ancestry, and minorities are typically underrepresented in the national database of volunteer donors.

Fortunately, a suitable match for Mr. Harris was recently uncovered in the national database. And while the SVFD drive in Sherman did not locate a donor for Mr. Harris, it has already surfaced at least one donor who is a match for someone else, according to Mr. John Dwyer, who helped organize the SVFD bone marrow drive The identity of bone marrow donors is not publicly disclosed by the national registry.