



Molly with dad Chris, mum Eve, sister Charlotte and brother Samuel

FAMILY

Making memories for Molly

■ Dad calls on old pals to help before daughter goes blind

By TUI BENJAMIN
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A BRANDESHOLME dad-of-three has enlisted old schoolfriends to help give his little girl experiences to last a lifetime before she goes blind.

Last December, after 18 months of tests, police officer Chris Bent and his wife Eve were told the devastating news their six-year-old daughter Molly will eventually go blind.

Molly has been diagnosed with Retinitis Pigmentosa, a degenerative eye condition which causes patches on the retina at the back of the eye.

The youngster, who is now registered visually impaired, has black patches in her field of vision and suffers from night blindness, where she cannot see in low lights.

There is no treatment or cure for the condition and Molly's sight will continue deteriorating until it goes completely — but her family have no idea when this could be.

But 27-year-old Chris, who now lives in Blackley, has enlisted his old Bury Church schoolfriends to tackle the Greater Manchester Run with him in May.

The team hope their sporting efforts will raise enough money to take Molly on a trip to see Disneyland Paris while she still can.

Eve, who is also mum to Charlotte, aged five and Samuel, aged two, said: "It was

a shock, but we wanted to try and turn what has happened into a positive thing.

"For some people there are no symptoms until their teens or later, but Molly's are already noticeable and are getting worse every time she has a check-up.

"All we can do is take her to do and see as many things as she can and make lots of fantastic memories as possible before her sight goes.

"Besides Disneyland, we are planning trips to Blackpool and London, as well as visits to plenty of museums.

"Molly loves the world and animals. She wants to explore



All we can do is take her to do and see as many things as she can

Eve Bent

everywhere she can while she can. She is such an adventurous and confident child and takes every day in her stride."

Eve's brother also suffers from the Retinitis Pigmentosa and his sight started to



Molly Bent, aged six

disappear at the age of 10, getting progressively worse until he was 17.

The family were told only boys could develop the hereditary condition, which meant it came as an extra shock when Molly was diagnosed.

Eve, aged 26, added: "She may have a year of sight but she may not — there is just no way of knowing."

The Bents also have a Facebook auction page to raise money and have raised £1,635 in donations to date.

Heywood charity Trewan Sands Children's Trust has donated a free holiday to Ribby Hall in Preston this Easter for Molly and her family.

To support Making Molly's Memories: go to gofundme.com/makingmollysmemories

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From left, old school pals Johnny Lowe, Chris Bent, Christian Simpson, Mark Dorey and Chris McGhie who will be running for Molly

LIONS

New destination for carnival floats parade

A NEW gala site has been chosen for the Bury Lions Carnival, to be staged on Sunday, June 8.

The venue will be the Market car park, off Spring Street, and attractions will include an all-day car boot sale, stalls, performances and children's inflatables.

The highlight of the event will be the floats parade which will follow its usual route through the town centre.

Bury Lions are still anxious to attract sponsorship for the event as well as volunteers to help

with the floats procession. Carnival chairman Scott Richardson said: "We are hoping to have a wide selection of stalls including food vendors, charity tombolas, businesses, emergency services, carnival queen, princesses past and current, with past and current Miss Bury."

For more information or to make a booking, from March 17 contact Mr Richardson on 07780 387425 or email burylionscarnival@hotmail.co.uk.

AGM

Labour choose singer to represent youth

A PERFORMER has been elected as a political representative of young people in the borough.

At the Bury North Labour annual general meeting, singer-songwriter Jsky, aged 26, was elected as youth and student officer.

He now plans to raise awareness with the next generation on how they can shape politics and engage with the

Labour Party. Jsky, who lives in The Rock and studied at Holy Cross College, said: "Students and young people often feel like they aren't a part of politics, and can grow to be disengaged.

"I'm hoping to raise debate over current affairs that affect us all.

"The fact that I'm singer and presenter does set me aside, but politics is in everything we do."

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