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## Trevor's Time

### Balaton baller steps up in a big way on the court

By Jenny Kirk

Trevor Smith might only be an eighth grader, but he's already shown that he's capable of playing at the varsity level.

Smith recently had the opportunity to move up to varsity, and during his first game, he ended up draining three shots from behind the arc for nine points.

Tracy-Milroy-Balaton was defeated 78-56 in that game on Jan. 26 against Camden North powerhouse Central Minnesota Christian School, but the Panthers would go on to win the next three games.

"It was an awesome thing to play with good teammates and good people around me," Smith said. "It's a really fun oppor-

tunity to play with the older guys, learn and have fun."

On Thursday, Jan. 28, TMB routed Dawson-Boyd 63-41. Smith recorded nine points, five rebounds and three assists. The following Tuesday, the Panthers defeated Kerkhoven-Murdock-Sunburg 62-51. Smith pitched in three points in the victory.

This past Friday, Smith drilled six three-point shots for a total of 18 points on 6 of 10 shooting from the floor.

"I was kind of surprised," Smith said of hitting six triples.

**Trevor**  
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## Fun in the Sun... and Snow



A lot of laughter was involved when Paige Minett quickly grabbed her 4-year-old daughter, Skylar, before she fell off the tube when it stuck partway down the big snowhill on a sunny but cold Friday morning in Balaton. Photo by Jenny Kirk

# Balaton cancer advocate steps into new role

By Jenny Kirk

Cancer is no friend to anyone. It can devastate families and take lives, which is why the fight against cancer is so important.

Rural Balaton resident Jennifer Evans took that to heart when she got involved with the American Cancer Society (ACS) more than 20 years ago. And for years, she thought about retiring at the 20-year mark, but when the time came, she ended up taking on an even bigger role.

"There's just something about having a job where I know I am providing hope and making a difference," Evans said. "For several years I said I was going to retire in 2020 after working with ACS for 20 years. But when the calendar changed over last year, I just knew it wasn't my time to quit. I felt like I had more important work to do. Little did I know what 2020 would have in store."

Evans said that the COVID-19 pandemic, much like it has been for other organizations and businesses, has been devastating to ACS.

"Without our 2020 fundraising events, the revenue was dramatically less than we needed to operate as we had been while also funding our lifesaving work," she said. "In order to ensure that ACS remains the



At left: Jennifer Evans smiles as she holds grandson, Cason. Above: Evans enjoying a rest while horse riding in the mountains. At right: Cason Evans and General help raise money for Relay for Life in Lyon County. Submitted photos



The Evans family is pictured (from left): Jess, Lavonne, Colin and Cason Jennifer, Derek, Amy, Corey and Colton.

most impactful cancer-fighting organization, ACS had to make dramatic budget cuts and layoffs. We've had to say goodbye to many of our colleagues, and those remaining in the communities have had their territories doubled in some cases."

In addition, the leadership structure was changed as well. Prior to that, there was often-times a director in each state, but in some cases now, several states are combined into one region.

"This is the direction my role has taken," Evans said. "My

current role is Director of Rural Development. I will oversee the fundraising efforts in South Dakota, North Dakota, Wyoming, Montana and Idaho."

Evans has also been involved in local Relay for Life events for more than 20 years. She said she has relayed in honor or in memory of many friends and family members, including her grandparents. She made the decision to get involved early on after hearing about "Caroline's Miracle."

"It was a story about a little

girl with leukemia," Evans said. "At the age of 6, she was diagnosed for a second time and her treatment options were limited. Her family heard about an American Cancer Society funded research trial. That was over 20 years ago now, and Caroline is still alive today — and because of the treatment discovered by that ACS funded researcher, childhood leukemia now has a 90% cure rate."

The story hit home for Evans because she's lost two cousins

to childhood leukemia.

"You can imagine that when I heard Caroline's story about the progress being made by the American Cancer Society, I wanted to get involved and do my part in helping to finish the fight," she said. "In 2009, my sister-in-law, Kim Clayton, started our team in Lyon County to remember my father-in-law, Dale Evans, who

fought a brief battle with lung cancer. That same year, Kim herself was diagnosed with Multiple Myeloma."

Evans said that Clayton "courageously fought her battle for over five years" before succumbing to the disease in August 2014. Clayton left behind a loving husband and 14-year-old son. In September 2015, Evans' mother-in-law, Bev Evans, lost her life to cancer.

"(Bev) was the most influential woman in my life and my biggest supporter," Jennifer said. "She believed in the work of the American Cancer Society and I know she would want us to continue our work to finish the fight!"

**Advocate**  
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## Valentine's Day - Sunday Feb 14, 2021

Serving: 11:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

♥ Roast beef dinner served with mashed potatoes, gravy, dinner roll, green beans

OR

♥ Sweet & Sour Chicken with veggies, fried rice or LoMein, Egg roll

All served with soup or salad and dessert

Reservations Required - Call 507-734-5877



HWY 14  
BALATON MN  
Across from Lake  
Yankton  
(507) 734-5877