



angel TREE MISSION



The Sankey Family

Battling: 36-year-old, Brandon

Valerie and her husband, Lon, have adopted and fostered dozens of children with special needs or who were medically fragile; including those with Down (Up) Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, no brain, drug babies, and more. Over the years they've foster 31 children and adopted 9. Since Lon's passing in 1996, Valerie has been operating as a single mom. She has three adopted children, Brandon, Korinne and Elijah at home.

Brandon was the second child they adopted. His birth parents placed him for adoption because he was born with Down (Up) Syndrome. His sister passed away when he was six months old, about the same time he was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia. Although Brandon was

able to go into remission a few times, his cancer relapsed when he was five and then again at thirteen. At age 32, he was also diagnosed with Polycythemia; a blood cancer also known as myeloproliferative neoplasms, that has no cure. His treatment consists of phlebotomy and Hydrea (oral chemo pill) to attempt to lessen the side effects related to the cancer. His doctors gave him a life expectancy of five to ten years. They're on year six.

They make regular trips for blood tests to ensure Brandon's hemoglobin doesn't get too high. His blood has started thickening which can cause a stroke or heart attack. He has good days and bad days, more bad than good lately. He gets a lot of headaches and dizzy spells. His energy has declined a substantial amount and he's sleeping a lot these days. Recently they participated in a fishing tournament that he looks forward to each year, however, this year the tournament workers noticed a huge decrease in Brandon's spunk and energy.

Brandon is a great man! His mom couldn't be prouder of his personality and himself as a person, with all he's overcome and endured. He's a great son, brother, and an all-around person. He loves drawing and is very artistic! The kids have had to overcome a lot over the years with the passing of their father, siblings, grandfather and losing everything they owned to a fire, but they have adjusted and are happy. Valerie focuses on the positive and shows their ABILITIES and not their disability!

This year we join to help this family have a wonderful Christmas!