

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Michael DeCook, Vice President/COO
Leyden Lions Minor League Football
decook@leydenlions.com
(773) 297-0999 cell



Leyden Lions Minor League Football Announce Fundraiser Game on June 27th to Benefit Child Afflicted with Rare Blood Disorder

Melrose Park, IL. – Leyden Lions minor league football player, James Zilinger, has witnessed the devastating impact that a rare blood disorder can have on men, women and children alike, as he has observed the struggles of twelve year-old Fiona O’Neill, who was diagnosed, shortly after birth, with Methemoglobinemia Type II. However, Zilinger refused to sit idly by without embracing the opportunity to promote awareness and help raise the funds necessary for his young cousin’s desperately needed care and medication. To that end, Zilinger and the Leyden Lions will conduct a fundraising campaign, beginning June 2nd, called “**25 Days for Fiona**”. This initiative will culminate with “**Fiona O’Neill’s ‘Heart of a Lion’ Fundraiser**” on Saturday, June 27, 2009, as the Leyden Lions oppose the Twin City Dawgs at Ralph “Babe” Serpico Memorial Field, 1000 N. 25th Ave., in Melrose Park, IL. Kickoff is scheduled for 7:00 P.M. with a ceremony to be conducted in Fiona’s honor shortly before the game.

“Watching two dedicated people, such as James and his wife, Megan, embracing the importance of this cause, made the decision to partner our minor league football team with them, an easy one,” said Jose Rodriguez, President/CEO of the Leyden Lions. “As we combat the Twin City Dawgs, on June 27th, we realize that Methemoglobinemia Type II affects everyone – not just the victims – and our fundraising efforts that day will make a bold assertion that we are here to help in any way that we can. The Leyden Lions will make that declaration by raising awareness and generating the desperately needed finances required for Fiona’s treatment and medication”

Proceeds from ticket sales, fan donations at the gate, and sales from a game-day raffle will directly benefit Fiona O’Neill and the Friends of Fiona group (www.giveforward.org/friendsoffiona). Lions’ fans unable to attend the game are encouraged to visit the aforementioned website to make a donation. Supporters who subscribe to the social media network Facebook can also add Friends of Fiona to their personal page to learn more about Fiona and her family.

For more information about how you can participate in helping the family of Fiona O’Neill, please contact Mike DeCook at (773)297-0999 or visit the Leyden Lions minor league football team website at www.leydenlions.com.

About Methemoglobinemia

Methemoglobinemia is a blood disorder in which the body cannot recycle hemoglobin after it is damaged. Hemoglobin is the oxygen-carrying molecule found in red blood cells. In some cases of methemoglobinemia, the hemoglobin is unable to carry oxygen effectively to body tissues. Methemoglobinemia may be passed down through families (inherited), or it may result from exposure to certain drugs, chemicals, or foods (acquired). Type II, also called generalized reductase deficiency, occurs when the enzyme doesn’t work anywhere in the body. A baby with this condition will have bluish

Press Release

skin color (cyanosis) at birth or shortly thereafter. Arterial blood gases and pulse oximetry results will be normal, making the condition challenging to diagnose. People with Type I methemoglobinemia and hemoglobin M disease usually do well. Type II methemoglobinemia is much more serious, and usually causes death within the first few years of life.

About the Leyden Lions Minor League Football Team

The Leyden Lions minor league football is a 501(c)(3) Non-for-Profit organization, founded in 2004 and based in Western Cook County. As one of 14 teams in the MidStates Football League (MSFL), the mission of the Leyden Lions football team is to serve the community with pride and passion as a quality example of individual and team excellence on the field and within the community. To learn more about the Leyden Lions and the MSFL, visit www.midstatesfootballleague.com.
