

# From Devastation to Inspiration — How One Family is Turning Heartbreak Into Hope

*Toy cars part of "pay-it-forward" movement*

PARK CITY, UTAH, USA, October 5, 2015 /EINPresswire.com/ -- July 5th, 2012 was a tragic day for Utah residents Hilary and Zac Cheney. Their four-year old son was killed when a four-foot tall, 200-pound gravestone fell on him. He later passed away from his injuries at Intermountain Healthcare's [Park City Medical Center](#).



For us, it's a way to turn a horrible tragedy into something positive.

*Si Hutt, Park City Medical Center*

At the time of his death, Carson was holding a toy car. Something his parents keep as a comforting memento of his brief but joyful life.

"I carried that car around with me for weeks," Hilary Cheney said. "I even slept with it under my pillow. Knowing it was the last thing Carson had played with makes it one of my most valued treasures."

The tiny 1970 Chevrolet Camaro Carson was holding now sits in a glass case in the family's living room. And that's the very car that sparked an international "pay-it-forward" movement. A movement the Cheney family hopes to see grow.

"On the first anniversary of Carson's passing, our family and friends wanted to come up with a way to keep Carson's memory alive. He loved playing with his toy cars and he brought so much joy to others, we wanted to combine those two traits. And from that, this idea just sort of came to us," explained Zac Cheney.

So the family bought some Hot Wheels, attached a note to the toy cars, and began hiding them for people to find. The note says: "Finders keepers. Please enjoy this gift in honor of Carson Cheney, July 31, 2007-July 5, 2012." The note also encourages people to take a picture of where they found the car and upload it to a Facebook page created in Carson's memory: Carson's Courage Cars.

"As people found them, it really inspired this movement. People began purchasing their own toy cars and hiding them all over the country, and we've even had people find cars in Japan, Italy and Germany. We had no idea it would ever get this big," Zac explained.

While Carson's Courage Cars has become somewhat of an international movement, the hospital where Carson passed away wants to drive it home, and help keep Carson's memory alive. Hospital employees have been placing toy cars around the building for people to find, and also collecting toy cars to donate to kids who are hospitalized over the holiday season.

Si Hutt, Park City Medical Center's administrator says employees are happy to take part in this program, and encourages others, no matter where they live, to participate.

“When this tragic event occurred, our employees shared in the Cheneys’ grief. When we learned of Carson’s Courage Cars, we wanted to be part of it. For us, it’s a way to turn a horrible tragedy into something positive. Anyone can participate by either hiding a toy for someone else to find or collecting them to donate to over the holiday season. We’ve even heard from people who plan to give out toy cars instead of candy at Halloween.”

For more information about the program, visit [www.facebook.com/CarsonDeanCheney](http://www.facebook.com/CarsonDeanCheney)

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