

My Perfect Real Christmas Tree

As I stand here looking at my tree, I see a tree that represents my life. Is it perfect? No, but neither is my life.

The first thing I see on my tree are the white lights. For centuries white has represented innocence and purity. Looking back to when I received my diagnosis at eight years old, I was innocent and pure. I was unaware of tumors, chemotherapy and radiation.

In contrast to the white lights are black silhouettes of the Victory Junction Gang. These silhouettes remind me of the friends I made during my stay at the Victory Junction Camp. Finally I was able to be just a kid climbing a rock mountain, not a life's mountain.

Next I see the flags spread around the tree. These flags signify victory in my life. The long laps I've took and now I'm at the victory line.

The cars are my body and although there is some damage, I'm still able to run, function, and spread my testimony to others, so that they never give up hope. To come to think of it, the cars are perhaps my favorite decoration because they also remind me to live each day to the fullest, take nothing for granted and go full speed ahead.

My most important decoration is not on my tree, but around it – my family. They surround my tree just like they have me since the first doctor's appointment eight long years ago.

As I stand here looking at my real tree I am reminded of how it looked just an hour ago. It is beautiful now. The purity of the white lights are now all the people I have loved that are now shining down on me from heaven. They are angels now.

The star is Adam, leading the way for victory and making my "Real Tree" possible.

This real tree represents life, my life. No, not perfect, but real.

Dana Brittany Smith

Greensboro, N.C. 27406

Age: 16