

# Great Falls CONNECTION

## In Honor of 'Birdie'

**Brad and Amy Davis establish Water Safety Foundation after losing their youngest son in an accidental drowning.**

By Aranya Tomseth/The Connection

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It was exactly one year ago this past Sunday that Brad and Amy Davis took their two sons Brandon, 4, and Trevor "Birdie," 2, to a "Moving From the Neighborhood" pool party held in their honor. It was Saturday, June 10, 2006, and the family had moved the day before from their home on Canterwood Lane in Great Falls to another home just down the street on Nalls Farm Way. They never dreamed that their first Friday night in their new home would be the only one that their youngest son would spend there.

When the Davis family arrived at the party held in the Canterwood Lane home of one of their former neighbors, 4-year-old Brandon decided to join some of the other children in the hot tub. His younger brother "Birdie" stayed by their mother's side.

"[He] came toddling into the pool area to sit with me while eating his hot dog and throwing pebbles into the pool," recalled Amy Davis, who is now 35. "I can still hear him laughing."

Amy Davis continued to watch "Birdie" until some friends came up behind her to say hello. They asked her how their move had gone, and Amy Davis said they conversed for about a minute before someone asked, "Where's Trevor?" "I looked beside me and said 'he was just here, he must have gone to find Brad,' but before I could finish the thought I panicked and began to look toward the pool," said Amy Davis. "I looked into the shallow end and saw nothing, and then I looked toward the deep end and could not believe my eyes."

Her 2-year-old son was floating in the deep end of the pool next to a pair of sunglasses. Brad and Amy Davis believe that their youngest son probably reached for the glasses, unaware of the danger posed by the deep water. Adults at the party performed CPR on "Birdie" until a helicopter arrived and flew the toddler to INOVA Fairfax Children's hospital. "Birdie" was taken off of life support three days later on June 13, 2006.

"You think your kids are safe because you have a fence around the pool, or because there are other parents around, but you cannot take your eyes off of your child for one second," said a tearful Amy Davis.

IN THE AFTERMATH of the tragedy, Brad and Amy Davis decided to found the non-profit 501(c)(3) Trevor "Birdie" Davis Water Safety Foundation. For them, it seemed to be the only way to bring something positive out of the worst day of their lives. The mission of the Foundation is to save children from accidental drowning by educating both children and adults about potential water hazards. "We want to get the word out there," said Brad Davis, 40. "Kids that age, their stomachs are so little, it doesn't take much water to fill them. With Trevor there was no splashing, no noise, and there were probably 20 or 30 adults there and a bunch of kids. You would think that someone would have seen



Photos Contributed

**Brandon Davis, 4, with his younger brother Trevor "Birdie" Davis, 2, prior to Trevor's accidental drowning in June 2006.**



**The Davis family.**

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something, but they didn't. People think something like this is never going to happen to them."

The Foundation has already raised about \$60,000 and Brad Davis said he hopes to raise about \$30-40,000 more at the already sold-out, first annual Trevor "Birdie" Foundation Golf Tournament which will be held at Reston National Golf Course on Sept. 17.

"We're going to continue to have fund-raising efforts," said Amy Davis. "We are not sure what they are going to be yet, but we are going to have them."

Brad and Amy Davis plan to use funds donated to the Foundation to bring the Infant Swimming Resource (ISR) / Safe Start USA program to the Washington D.C. metropolitan area. The program, which was developed by Dr. Harvey Barnett in Orlando, Florida in 1966, has trained over 140,000 children under the age of 4 how to survive in the water. According to the Infant Swim Resource Web site, over 1,700 survivals of near-drowning incidents have been witnessed as a result of the program.

"To lose a child to a drowning is horrible," said Amy Davis. "This program helps the child learn how to save itself."



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