



Dear sponsors, volunteers, donors, family and friends:

On a dark, dark day in May, 2001, our youngest daughter, Rebecca was diagnosed with Spinal Muscular Atrophy Type 2. Like many others who have had this bomb dropped on them, we had never heard of this devastating disease. Rebecca was only twenty months old and we were told to “take her home and love her”.

After a year of intense grieving, we were able to slowly navigate our way back into the light. Since that fateful day, Rebecca has brought an immeasurable amount of happiness into our lives. Life is good.

We celebrate Rebecca’s every day with us. She might require more physical care than our other children, Rachel and Luke but other than that, her life is as normal as can be.

Rebecca is one of the lucky ones. She is now eight years old. Half of the children born with SMA don’t live to see their second birthday.

But, she is getting progressively weaker. It is a slow, gradual process but it is happening.

A recent breakthrough in research that, if successful, would be the first novel drug designed specifically to treat Spinal Muscular Atrophy, is now close to reaching SMA patients. A contingent in the USA is trying to get the Treatment Acceleration Act passed by Congress to hasten the process.

Imagine if it works? Imagine knowing we were all part of the process? Could there be a better reward in life than knowing that you have helped an infant struggling for his every breath to live or a child in a wheelchair to be able to walk?

To date, \$1million has been raised through Rebecca’s charities, primarily through the Rebecca Run and now through the Angel Gala. We thank you for your support, love and dedication to eradicate this disease.

Together we *are finding* a cure,

Theresa Van Fraassen

