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Boy's brave fight leaves family living minute by minute

Seven-year-old battling inoperable brain cancer

> By Julie Slack CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

On a cursory glance, it seems like a regular household with youngsters — Lego blocks lying scattered on the floor, sippy cups on the coffee table and photos of smiling children on the walls.

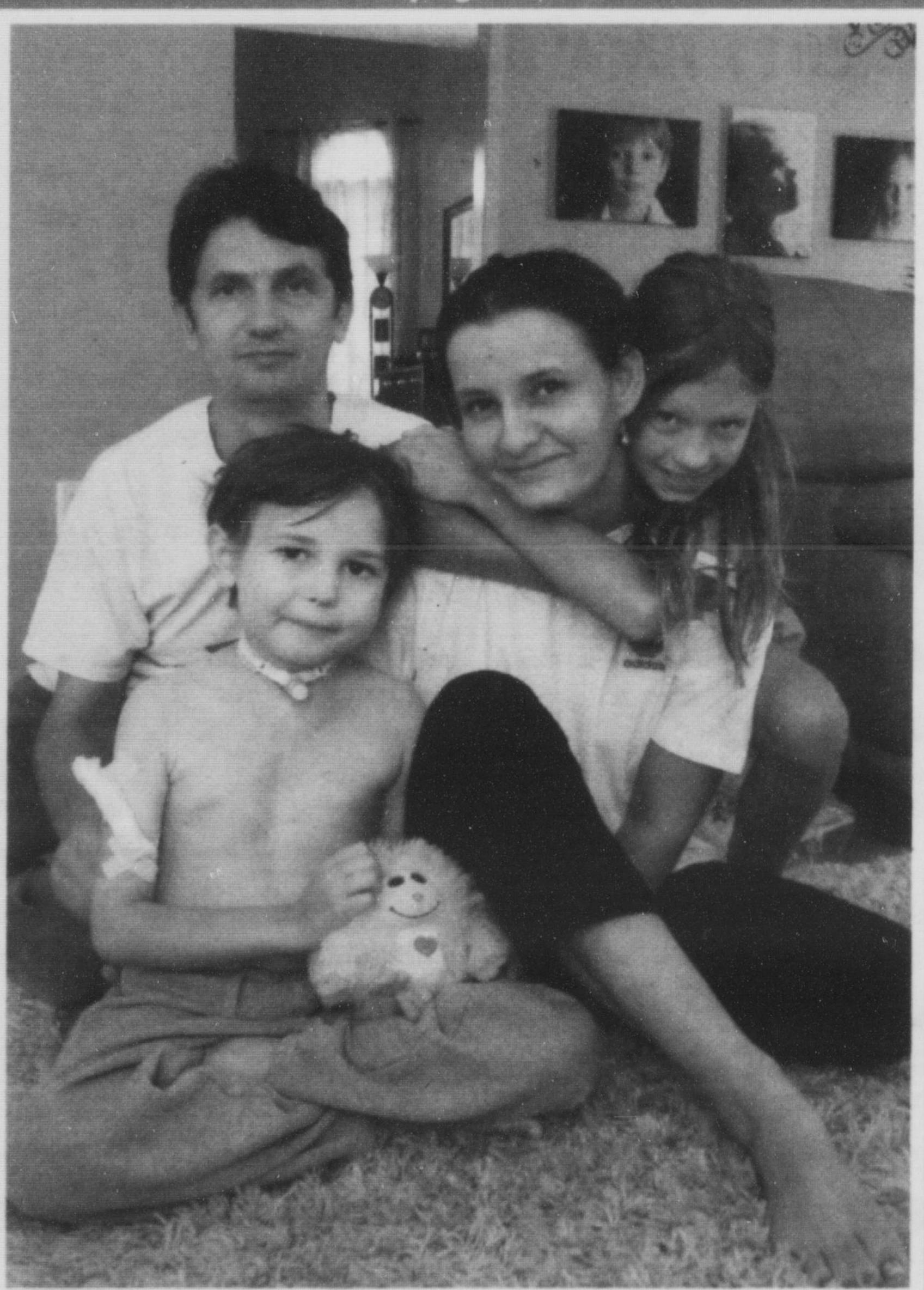
But the picture of a normal family home disappears when you catch a glimpse of Marco Maluda, a seven-year-old boy who's been diagnosed with inoperable brain cancer.

Marco should be getting ready for Grade 2, playing with his friends in his Milton neighbourhood, riding his bike and going camping with his family, mom Julia Mrofkova, dad Miro and sister Nicole, nine.

Instead, he's at home, trachea tube in his throat that provides him with an airway where his is collapsed, G-tube in his stomach so life-sustaining medicines are administered throughout the day and an IV tube in his arm.

His bravery beads — there's more than 2,000 of them strung together — hang off the banister of the stairway. Each bead represents a procedure, a needle poke, a chemotherapy treatment.

Yet through it all, the sweet boy grins up at his mom, and — tiny fingertip placed over his



Seven-year-old Marco Maluda is pictured here with sister Nicole, 9, and parents Julia Mrofkova and Miro Maluda. Julie Slack / Canadian Champion

Halton dubbed safest region

Despite two murder suicides in 2012, Halton Region was dubbed the safest Canadian regional municipality with a population of more than 100,000.

The news, which Halton has had numerous times before, is based on numbers reported in Statistics Canada's 2012 Crime Severity Index, which was released earlier this month. According to the report, when compared to the 49 Canadian communities with populations over 100,000, Halton has the lowest indexes in crime severity, violent crime severity and non-violent crime severity.

During last week's Halton Regional Police Service Board meeting, Halton Police Chief Stephen Tanner attributed Halton's Crime Severity Index score to various factors.

Among them are Halton's aging population, its philosophy of proactive policing and the increased visibility of police in the commu-

The police chief said increased resources directed at drug enforcement may also be helping to drive down other crimes, as many occur hand-in-hand with drug-related criminal activity.

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