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FATHER FIGHTS CANCER THAT TOOK HIS SON

BY JESSICA LYONS

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After losing his young son three years ago to a form of cancer that affects children called Neuroblastoma, Sarel River is organizing a concert at Flushing Town Hall in hopes of raising awareness about the disease while also raising funds to go towards research.

A native of Haifa, Israel, River came to the United States in 1989 to attend Berklee College of Music in Boston, graduating in 1994. A jazz musician, he composes as well as plays the guitar, which he first learned when he was 18 years old.

River, who also spent time living in Budapest, now lives with his wife Daphne on the Long Island and Queens border in Hewlett. The couple has a one-year-old son and another child due in November.

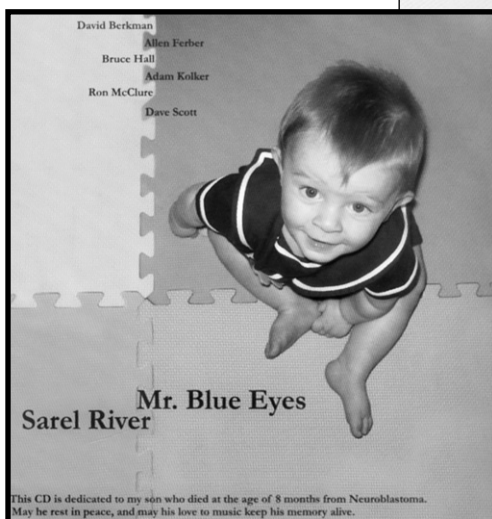
When River and his wife's son Ethan was 8-months-old, he was diagnosed with Neuroblastoma, a form of cancer that effects the nervous system. There is currently no cure for this form of cancer, which rarely affects children over the age of 10.

Following Ethan's death, River said that he was unable to do anything for several months. However, he eventually decided to pay tribute to his son through his original music.

"I tried to find a way to keep his memory alive," said River.

River accomplished that through the CD "Mr. Blue Eyes," which is dedicated to Ethan and was released in 2005.

After his wife found information about the Children's Neuroblastoma Cancer Foundation (www.cnfc-child-cancer.org) on the internet, River approached the organization about having a fundraising concert. The first annual concert will take place on Monday, October 22 at 7 p.m. at Flushing Town Hall and will feature eight original compositions by River. Joining him for the concert will be bassist Ron McLure, drummer Bruce



Hall, pianist David Berkman, trumpeter/flugelhorn player Dave Scott, saxophonist/flutist Adam Kolker and trombonist Allen Ferber.

All proceeds from the concert will benefit the Children's Neuroblastoma Cancer Foundation. The organization was founded after the passing of Nicholas A. Tallungan when he was 10 years old. The main components of its mission are to encourage and support research, provide services to children with Neuroblastoma and their families, and to educate the public and health care providers about this form of cancer.

"Basically what we're trying to do is get the public to know about the disease," said River, adding that the money raised will help with research so that at some point in the future other parents will not have to go through the same thing that he and his wife did.

Flushing Town Hall is located at 137-35 Northern Boulevard.

Tickets for The First Annual Concert for the Children's Neuroblastoma Cancer Foundation can be purchased by visiting www.active.com/donate/jazz-concertforcnf. More information is also available at www.sarelriver.com.



Israeli native Sarel River has organized a fundraising concert following the passing of his son Evan, who was also the inspiration for his CD "Mr. Blue Eyes." (insert)

Photos Courtesy Sarel River

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SAREL RIVER