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Now cancer-free, teenager ready for dream vacation

By **Jeff Starck**

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Kelsey Roble's first wish was to be free of cancer; her second came true Monday night.

The Make-A-Wish Foundation gave the 16-year-old Wausau resident a six-day trip to Oregon, where she will try sandboarding for the first time.

Doctors told the Wausau West High School student she had Hodgkin's disease June 21, 2005, and she underwent chemotherapy and radiation treatments until February. She's come out of treatment healthy and ready to continue her active lifestyle.

"I didn't expect this many people to care," Kelsey said after representatives from Make-A-Wish unveiled her wish.

Sporting a big smile, Kelsey was nearly speechless while paging through the trip itinerary. Her father, Tim, said the family and the foundation have worked since April to make her wish come true. He said it's been difficult to keep the secret from Kelsey -- who knew something was up -- and other family members who might spill the secret.

The Wausau Harley-Davidson HOG chapter got into the act, roaring up to the Roble's home and giving the teen a motorcycle ride and before taking her out to dinner.

An avid skier, snowboarder and wakeboarder, sandboarding has had Kelsey's interest piqued since she first saw it on television. The sport essentially is snowboarding on sand. In Oregon, she will be coached by sandboarder Josh Tenge, who has set world records with his jumps.

"It's something different, and not many people do it," she said. "It's more fun and extreme than skiing."

In addition to sandboarding, her trip will include visiting lighthouses, kayaking and dune buggy rides. She'll leave for her trip in luxury Aug. 12, when a limousine takes her to Central Wisconsin Airport in Mosinee.



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Kelsey Roble, center, and her parents, Tim and Jill, will fly to Oregon for a six-day vacation provided by the Make-A-Wish Foundation. *Jeff Starck/Wausau Daily Herald*

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About Kelsey Roble

Age: 16

Residence: Wausau

Education: Wausau West High School junior

Occupation: Greenheck internship in the project development department

Family: Father, Tim; mother, Jill; brother, Kyle, 21

Something you should know: Kelsey coaches soccer and likes playing paintball.

