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For Immediate Release:

PVEC To Sponsor Golf Outing to Help Local Resident Battle Cancer

Mike Billington, a 20 year-old resident of Liberty Township, New Jersey, and a 2003 graduate of Hackettstown High School, was recently diagnosed with Stage IV Alveolar Rhabdomyosarcoma. Mike is currently undergoing chemotherapy treatment at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York. Rhabdomyosarcoma, a soft tissue sarcoma, is a rare cancerous tumor with only several hundred new cases per year throughout the United States. Treatment for Rhabdomyosarcoma may be necessary for an extended period of time. In order to assist the family, Panther Valley Ecumenical Church is sponsoring a golf outing fund-raiser to help Mike and his parents meet mounting financial obligations. The golf outing is scheduled for Friday, October 21, 2005 rain or shine, at the Minebrook Golf Club in Hackettstown, New Jersey. Pre-registration for the golf event is to take place anytime before October 7, 2005. Registration for the golf outing will begin at Minebrook Golf Club at 11:00 am, with tee off taking place at 12:30 pm. The golf outing costs \$125 per person and includes golf cart, golf fees, and a buffet dinner. Non- golfers who want to participate in the event can attend a buffet dinner at Minebrook Golf Club, which begins at 6:00 pm, for \$50 per person.

At the time Mike was diagnosed, he had just completed his sophomore year at Seton Hall University, where he studies Political Science. Mike is a member of the Seton Hall Pep Band, and also plays bass in his own band, Talent Show Rejects.

As a student at Hackettstown High School, Mike was a member of the National Honor Society and graduated in the top ten of his class. He was an active member of the band program, playing the alto saxophone and serving as the assistant drum major for the Tiger Marching Band during his junior year and drum major his senior year. He was awarded the Bausch & Lomb Science Award, represented Hackettstown High School at Boys' State, enjoyed athletics, wrote for the school newspaper, and was active with his church youth group. Mike participated three times in the Appalachian Service Project through Trinity United Methodist Church, which helps to build and refurbish houses for the poor in the Appalachian Mountains. He was also a member of the Belvidere Swim Team, and was awarded the "Lorraine Scott" award for the most congenial, supportive, and best all around swimmer.

According to Judy Ours, Mike's high school guidance counselor, "Mike is intelligent, highly motivated, responsible and respectful. He always sets very high goals for himself and then works hard and consistently to achieve them, a part of his character that will be very helpful at this time. I think of him as soft-spoken, kind and hardworking. He gives much of himself to his school and community." Joan deRuiter, a teacher at Hackettstown High School, commented: "Mike has always been generous to his school, his church, and his community. This Golf Outing gives everyone a chance to repay some of that generosity and show him our support during this difficult time."

Contributions payable to the Mike Billington Fund-PVEC can be mailed to Panther Valley Ecumenical Church, 1490 Route 517, Hackettstown, New Jersey 07840. Information on the golf outing or buffet dinner can be obtained by contacting Amy Testa at the Panther Valley Ecumenical Church office at 908-852-5444 or e-mail atesta@pvem.net.