**BY EMILY WICHMER**
Staff Writer

Junior Damian Chavez has waited nine years to make a donation, it’s not caring money — he’s caring his hair.

Chavez has been growing his hair since he was in sixth grade, and at the beginning of the year, he decided that he was going to give it away. Chavez plans to donate his hair at the end of the year to Locks of Love, an organization that gives wigs to children who lose their hair due to cancer treatments. Chavez also is raising money for St. Baldrick’s Foundation. When he reaches his goal of $10,000, Chavez will completely shave his head.

Chavez said he didn’t plan to grow his hair specifically for charity.

“When I decided to grow out my hair, it was more of a personal decision,” Chavez said. “I’ve probably been asked if I’m going to donate my hair for Locks of Love for a decade. At first, that wasn’t the goal at all, but then I don’t think that it has a great opportunity to do something beautiful for others and didn’t want to waste it.”

Chavez said he already has donated about 10 inches to Locks of Love during Labor Day weekend, and he plans to donate another 10 inches at the end of the year during May.

Rachel Pipton, stylist at Pages of Love salon in Kirksville, said she knows many people would donate to Locks of Love. Pipton said the reason people don’t donate is because they only require eight inches as opposed to Locks of Love’s 10 inches required for Locks of Love.

“People, in general, are Maybe because they think there’s no point because people don’t know how to donate, how many inches they already have,” Pipton said. “They don’t know how to donate. Sometimes donors only need to send in their hair, and not that they have to send in a padded envelope to the organization. We said there in an extra one for the donation.”

“Shaving is a lasting impact,” Pipton said. “I think to do something like this is a very uplifting gesture. It’s beautiful for them to donate, and it’s beautiful for others.”

Chavez said Pantene also accepts donations for Locks of Love, which allows Chavez to donate more hair than Locks of Love does.

“Until I’m in my thirties, which is when I plan to cut my hair, I’ll keep donating my hair,” Chavez said. “I find it’s a way to do what I want and donate to a great cause.”

Junior Damian Chavez is donating his hair and raising money to benefit childhood cancer research

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**Lo cks of Love Guidelines**

- Hair that is colored or permed is acceptable.
- Hair cut years ago is usable if it has been stored in a ponytail or braid.
- Curly hair can be pulled straight to measure the minimum 10 inches.
- Layered hair is acceptable if the longest layer is 10 inches, and can be divided into multiple ponytails.
- Hair that has been bleached is acceptable.
- Only a few inches can be shaved off and not in a ponytail or braid.
- They are not able to accept bleach hair due to a chemical reaction that occurs during the manufacturing process.
- They are not able to use their hair.

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Junior Damian Chavez has been growing his hair since he was a sixth grader. This May, he will donate it to Locks of Love and plans to raise $10,000 for St. Baldrick’s Foundation.

**Lo cks of Love Hair Donation Form**

Anna Grace/Videa

How to Donate:

- Place your dry ponytail in a resealable plastic bag.
- Place resealable plastic bag in a padded envelope.
- If you wish to receive our personalized thank-you card, please fill out the Locks of Love hair donation form, write your name and address on a full size square sheet of paper and include inside the envelope.
- We cannot accept forms from people who do not send their name and address included in these instructions.
- We do not staple or wrap donations form around the bag.
- Please send the address listed below. If it is important to you to know when your package is delivered, you might want to request a tracking number.

**Locks of Love Foundation**

Phone: 561-833-7332 Fax: 561-833-7962

*according to www.locksoflove.org*