

# Lou Gehrig and me

Mother chronicles young son's past-life memories in new book being turned into feature film

By BRETT LEIGH DICKS  
NEWS-PRESS CORRESPONDENT

**L**ots of boys fantasize about playing professional baseball. While 9-year-old Christian Haupt hopes to pitch for either the Dodgers or Yankees one day, his most poignant baseball dreams are not about what's to come, but what's happened in the past.

"When I was 2 or 3, I started telling stories from my past life," the Santa Barbara boy recently told the News-Press during a break in baseball practice with the Santa Barbara Stingrays' U9s at the Goleta Valley South Little League fields. "The memories have faded away (as) I've become older, but I had lots of memories and told lots of stories. I really believe I was Lou Gehrig."

Christian's mother, Cathy Byrd, has chronicled her son's incredible journey in the new book "The Boy Who Knew Too Much: An Astounding True Story of a Young Boy's Past-Life Memories" (Hay House, \$19.99).

Ms. Byrd, who moved to Santa Barbara from Thousand Oaks in August so her son could attend Laguna Blanca School, will host a book signing at 4 p.m. Sunday at Chaucer's Books, 3321 State St.

When Christian was 2 years old, he insisted to his mother that he was a tall baseball player. He told stories of staying in hotels and traveling on trains with the New York Yankees and even confessed his long-held disdain for Babe Ruth.

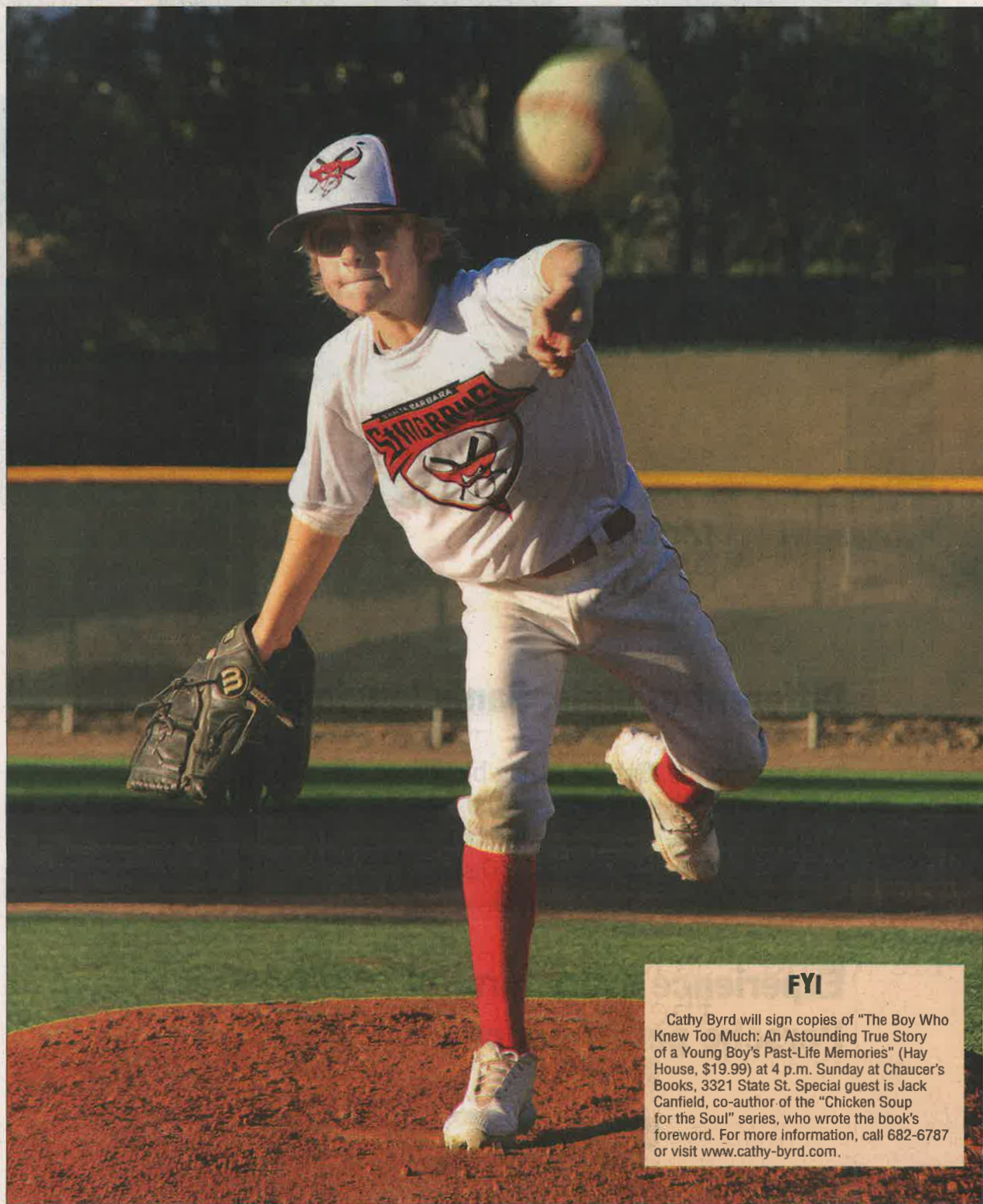
The 229-page paperback, which was released in March, seeks to inspire even the most hardened skeptic into believing that love never dies.

"When Christian started having these memories, I told the pastor at my church about how he was giving us details of playing baseball in the 1920s and '30s," Ms. Byrd, 50, recalled. "My pastor insinuated that he could be possessed by the spirit of a dead person. Wanting to take a more scientific approach, I did some research and found experts at the University of Virginia School of Medicine who have been researching cases of children's past lives."

"Being a Christian, I didn't believe in reincarnation and was quite a skeptic, so this has taken me on quite a spiritual journey also. And the conclusion I have come to in the end is that your soul survives this earthly existence and that love can surpass one lifetime. That is what compelled me to write the book."

Having been introduced to baseball through neighbor friends at an early age, Christian was obsessed with the game by the time he turned 2. He constantly wore a baseball uniform and would play the game with friends from dawn till dusk. Like all modern-day prodigies, Christian's rise to fame came through social media.

After producers saw posted videos of his baseball prowess, he was hired at age 3 in 2011 to



## FYI

Cathy Byrd will sign copies of "The Boy Who Knew Too Much: An Astounding True Story of a Young Boy's Past-Life Memories" (Hay House, \$19.99) at 4 p.m. Sunday at Chaucer's Books, 3321 State St. Special guest is Jack Canfield, co-author of the "Chicken Soup for the Soul" series, who wrote the book's foreword. For more information, call 682-6787 or visit [www.cathy-byrd.com](http://www.cathy-byrd.com).

**Nine-year-old Christian Haupt practices with the Santa Barbara Stingrays' U9s on a recent day at the Goleta Valley South Little League fields. As a toddler, he recalled memories that led his mother to write a new book about his past life as Lou Gehrig.**

star with Adam Sandler in the movie "That's My Boy." The film's production took the family to Boston. While they were in town, they took the opportunity to watch a game at Fenway Park.

"When we were at Fenway, Christian saw a giant picture of Babe Ruth," Ms. Byrd recalled. "Christian looked at the picture and got really upset by it and said,

'I don't like him; he was mean to me.' I laughed the people around us said, 'The kid's on to something because Babe Ruth was a real jerk.' But then he started saying more and more things about Lou Gehrig."

For the next three years, as he staked his own claim on baseball, including throwing the first pitch for a 2012 Los Angeles Dodgers

game after meeting pitcher Clayton Kershaw, Christian recounted more and more historically accurate facts about Lou Gehrig — things that he could not have possibly known, said his mother. While the memories have slowly started to disappear as he has gotten older, Christian is still convinced he was Lou Gehrig in a past life.

"It's not an uncommon thing," Ms. Byrd said. "The researchers at the University of Virginia have over 2,500 cases from children all over the world who have exhibited exactly the same behavior. There is definitely a pattern there. All their memories start at an early age, the kids usually recall them in a very serious tone when

Please see **BOY** on A

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**NATION & WORLD / A4**  
**ONWARD**

GOP tax plan clears hurdle in Senate;  
fight erupts over spending



**LIFE / A6**  
**REMARKABLE STORY**

Local mom writes about son's  
past-life memories in new book



**WEATHER**  
Partly sunny  
Coast: 71/43  
Inland: 75/40  
COMPLETE  
FORECAST A8

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**LIFE**

WEDNESDAY, NOV

## 'I didn't even know the book was being pitched'

### ■ BOY

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they're drowsy or before falling asleep, and they all start to fade around a similar age."

With Christian's memories now all but faded, Ms. Byrd wanted to share her relocations of her son's remarkable story with others.

With a bachelor's degree in communication studies from UCLA and a master's degree in business administration from Pepperdine University, Ms. Byrd spent the first decade of her professional life working in sports marketing. In 2014, while working in Thousand Oaks as a real estate agent, she took a writing class in the San Fernando Valley.

"When I took the class, I could see people being really touched and moved by the story, and it was that class that encouraged me to write the book," Ms. Byrd said.

In 2015, she attended a writing workshop in Maui conducted by self-help author Wayne Dyer who himself was working on a book

about children's past life memories. Ms. Byrd won a publishing contest at the workshop that helped her find a publishing deal for her story. In the time since, 20th Century Fox has purchased the rights for a film.

"The day I turned the final manuscript in to my publisher, I got a call that 20th Century Fox wanted to buy the movie rights," Ms. Byrd said. "I didn't even know the book was being pitched for a movie. The script is being finished now and it's scheduled to go into production next year."

As remarkable as Christian's experiences are, Ms. Byrd said the motivation to write the book goes beyond that.

"There's so much knowledge and wisdom in children and a big message in the book is to listen to them," she said. "The book also offers a message of unity. If we can see people as souls within a body, rather than the body itself, I think that can help us have more compassion for people who are different than us."

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Santa Barbara resident Cathy Byrd was inspired to write a book about her son's past-life memories, she said, in part to offer a message of unity. "If we can see people as souls within a body, rather than the body itself, I think that can help us have more compassion for people who are different than us," she said.