



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EXCHANGE CLUB AND CYS BUILD LASTING RELATIONSHIP

Uniontown, PA – Fayette County Children and Youth Services relies heavily on contributions and support from community members and organizations.

One such organization, the Fairchance Exchange Club, recently hosted its sixth annual Ribs for Cribs event in support of all that CYS does for Fayette County families.

With a goal of family reunification, CYS works to ensure county children's safety by investigating allegations of abuse and neglect.

Founded in September 1946, the Fairchance Exchange Club is comprised of members who strive to uphold its three core values: family, community and country. In addition to the annual Ribs for Cribs event, the nonprofit organization regularly hosts fundraisers and other events with the goal of giving back to its community through donations, scholarships and more.

This year's Ribs for Cribs event, held over Memorial Day weekend at Fairchance Community Park on Sheldon Avenue, featured its traditional 5K Run/Walk and a "Wee Ones" Race for children. Awards, entertainment and vendors were also part of what typically becomes an all-day community affair.

A portion of the proceeds from entry fees and food sales were donated to Children and Youth Services, to be used toward the purchase of cribs and other necessities.

While vendors typically sell the titular barbecue ribs, Exchange Club Past President Christina Beissell said the event's early start time prompted the group to, instead, sell pork sausages and other breakfast items.

"We're a very small service organization, and most of our efforts are directed right to our Fairchance area, like putting up Christmas lights around town and a ton of stuff people don't even realize we do," Beissell said. "One of the club's main missions is to fight child abuse, so that's why we teamed up with CYS and started contributing where we could on a larger scale."

The relationship between the two organizations extends beyond the annual 5K, with the club regularly contributing to CYS' efforts.

Most recently, club members Barbara Harmon and Renee Wheeler joined Beissell in presenting CYS Deputy Administrator John Fritts with 24 care bags, on behalf of their membership.

Fritts said the bags, 12 for girls and 12 for boys, will be used for children involved with the agency who have had to leave behind many of their belongings when entering foster care.

“We unfortunately have a lot of children in foster care - 145 to be specific,” Fritts said. “These are 145 children that were removed from their parents due to abuse or neglect. They rarely come with anything.”

The care bags contained blankets, stuffed animals and other small comfort items, Fritts added.

“You would be surprised how much these items mean to a child that has lost everything,” he said.

Beissell said the bags were a way for club members to make a small impact on their community.

“We just thought maybe, if we can give one kid some comfort, even for just a few hours, that’s what makes a difference,” she said.

For more information on how you can help make a difference in the lives of Fayette County youth, visit www.fccys.org.

To learn more about the Fairchance Exchange Club and participate in upcoming events, email Beissell at cbeissell@gmail.com or visit www.Facebook.com/FairchanceExchange.

To learn more about Fayette County, visit www.FayetteCountyPA.org.

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