

Fort Myers area foster kids get help entering adulthood

Francesca Donlan • fdonlan@news-press.com • October 11, 2010

The Kiwanis Club of Fort Myers South offered a helping hand to foster children who have aged out of the system.

The Kiwanis partnered with Supporting Independent Young Adults (SIYA) to provide cleaning supplies to each former foster teen in the Fort Myers area as they move into their new home.

"In Florida, foster children leave the system at 18, which means they have to sign the lease to their new apartment on their birthday," said Jane Bell of SIYA. "Most of these kids don't have the foundation, skills and support to be successful on their own, which is how we are trying to help."

The cost of moving into a new place is shocking and these kids need all the help they can get, said Jan Sommer of SIYA.

"Between rent, application fee, security deposits, water and electric there is little money left, especially for cleaning supplies," she said.

Kiwanis stepped up when they heard how these kids struggle, said Rachel Toomey, Kiwanis Club of Fort Myers South president.

"Who would have thought teens would be so excited to be given a broom? We feel grateful that we can help them in at least this small way."

Supporting Independent Young Adults is working to purchase or build a transitional living facility where on-site support would be available. To contact SIYA, call Jane Bell or Jan Sommer at 206-3294 or e-mail siyainc.jan@gmail.com.

The Kiwanis Club of Fort Myers South is looking for more service-minded individuals and business professionals who would like to make a direct impact on the community through volunteering. Meetings are held every Tuesday at 7:15 a.m. at Edison State College. For details, call Toomey at 940-3893 or e-mail Rachel.Toomey33@gmail.com.

Tanger fights cancer

The 2010 Breast Cancer Awareness Campaign for Tanger Outlet Centers means deals and donations.

Tanger Outlet Centers celebrates its 17th anniversary in the battle against breast cancer this year.

The outlet center offers the 25 percent PinkStyle Card. For a \$1 donation, shoppers will receive a special card that will give them 25 percent off at participating Tanger stores nationwide. The PinkStyle Cards will be available at all Tanger Shopper Services and online at tangeroutlet.com until Oct. 25.

Money raised by Pink Cards is donated locally to the Stanley K. Tanger Breast Cancer Fund through the American Cancer Society of Lee County for its Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk.

Tanger Outlets is located at 20350 Summerlin Road, about two miles before the Sanibel Causeway. The Tanger center features 40 brand name and designer outlet stores including Polo Ralph Lauren, Gap, Carter's, OshKosh B'gosh, Jockey, Reebok and Coldwater Creek.

For a complete listing of Tanger Outlet Centers, visit tangeroutlet.com or call 800-4-TANGER.

Donation for dogs

Angelina's Ristorante officially wrapped up its "Dog Days of Summer" program recently with a donation of a ton of dog food to the Lee County Domestic

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Animal Services' Community Pet Pantry Network.

The Bonita Springs restaurant purchased 2,360 pounds of dog food at BJ's Wholesale Club in Cape Coral. Volunteers from BJ's helped to transport the 59 bags of Purina Beneful, IAMS and Kibbles and Bits brand dog foods to the LCDAS facility.

The pet pantry provides food to qualifying pet owners in an effort to prevent the surrender of pets to shelters because their owners cannot afford to feed them.

The program has been in operation since May of 2008.

"We want to keep pets in loving homes instead of seeing them deposited in overcrowded shelters," according to Donna Ward, director of LCDAS.

"It is a one-year program that provides food and veterinary care. If we didn't do this, a lot of pets would go hungry and suffer."

Miracle card contest

The Fort Myers Miracle is looking for a little holiday magic.

Team members want to give kids from kindergarten to eighth grade a chance to design the Miracle holiday card.

It's their annual "Create Our Holiday Card" contest. Kids can use their artistic ability to design the actual holiday card cover the Miracle send to their friends and business partners.

The winner will receive an autographed Miracle bat, six box seats to the Miracle's 2011 home opener and the honor of throwing out the first pitch at that game.

Last year's winner was Joshua Heald, then a third-grader at Summit Christian School. All entries must be postmarked by Nov. 5 to be eligible for consideration. Include your name, address, age, grade and school name with your entry. For more information, contact the Miracle at 768-4210. To send or drop off your design: Miracle Baseball 14400 Six Mile Cypress Parkway Fort Myers, FL 33912.

Special jeans

Patchington at Bell Tower Shops in south Fort Myers is selling a special line of jeans in support of Susan G. Komen for the Cure. It started Sunday and runs through Saturday.

Customers will have the opportunity to style their own pair of jeans by Not Your Daughter's Jeans. Exclusive pocket rhinestone bling will be offered on black, gray or dark blue denim in a straight leg or bootcut style. Sizes are 0-18. The cost is \$108. A \$2 donation will be made to the fight against breast cancer for any type of jean sold at the store.

Pink refreshments will be served daily, and a free pair of jeans will be raffled.

The store, at 13499 S. Cleveland Ave., is located near Saks Fifth Avenue. Store hours are noon to 5 p.m. Sunday and 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

For more information, call 482-7733.

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