



South Williamsport

{AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT}



Mini THON raises over \$26,600 for the Four Diamonds Fund

March 7, 2018

The Mini THON Club at South Williamsport Area High School along with 255 students raised \$26,677 for the Four Diamonds Fund. Since 2011 the club has raised \$178,000 for children with cancer.

The seventh to 12th grade students danced, played and shared heartfelt moments to support the organization that helps children and families suffering from cancer at the Penn State Health Children's Hospital in Hershey.



The 255 students who raised \$26,677 for the Four Diamonds Fund along with their special banner for Callie Cavanaugh, of Loyalsock Township.

The high school students stayed from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. doing activities like playing Nintendo Wii games, a pie eating contest, volleyball, a massive game of Twister, yoga and much more to keep everyone busy all night.

Though the event is fun for everyone to participate in, the students know Mini THON is much more than a 12-hour dance party. An eight-year-old named Callie Cavanaugh helped keep them focused on the reason they were doing it in the first place.

Cavanaugh, of Loyalsock Township, has been battling cancer for two years. The South Williamsport students created a banner for her with different color handprints all over it to lift her spirits.

“Knowing about Cavanaugh who is in our own backyard, really puts it into perspective,” said Natalya Steppe, 11th grader and Mini THON club vice president.

The concept of helping children they will never meet can be difficult to grasp. Knowing there is someone in the community fighting cancer, it has encouraged the students to make a difference for kids like Cavanaugh.

Mike Rodgers, co-club advisor, said supporting her makes the students more aware and to think about how cancer has affected her and her family's lives. It makes it all real to them.

At different points in the night, they had individuals speak about childhood cancer and how it has impacted their lives in some way.

Tayge Molino, 11th grader and club community outreach officer, was one of the students to share his story. At age 11 he was diagnosed with Crohn's Disease, he had to stay in the hospital for a week where he got to interact with kids his age who were fighting cancer.

"It shocked me," he said. "I was there for a week and it was terrible. I couldn't image what it was like for them to be there for months."

Since then he feels obligated to make a difference for children like the ones he met as a child.

Sam Livorno, 11th grader and Mini THON club secretary/treasurer, said it is great for the entire school to unite for a good cause like the Four Diamonds Fund.

Coming together to raise over \$26,600 creates a positive bond among the students because they all had a hand in improving the lives of children fighting childhood cancer.

Rodgers said he is incredibly proud of all the work his club members have put into such a large event. It is exciting for the students in the club to see the final amount raised because they get to see that their dedication paid off.

The selfless actions of the students and teachers at Mini THON sacrificed a night of sleep to make a difference for children fighting for their lives.

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