



BY CARL KOTALA

Supporters eat cupcakes for a cause

Family fun, a silent auction and ... cupcakes ... from some of Brevard County's top bakeries will all be part of the second "Cupcakes to Cherish" event, which is set to take place from 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday, July 13 at the Heritage Isles Club in Melbourne.

The event will be put on by Cherishing the Journey, a non-profit organization.

In addition to fun, family-oriented activities, ticket holders will enjoy an unlimited sampling of cupcakes from nine or more local bakeries. Amateur bakers will also compete in a number of different categories, and a number of local businesses have donated goods and services for a silent auction.

There will be a Cupcake Decorating Station where kids will be able to decorate their own cupcakes, as well as a balloon artist, face-painting, a photo booth and a Cupcake Boutique featuring cupcake-related

merchandise.

Jennifer Hardin founded Cherishing the Journey following the death of her newborn son, Matthew, who died shortly after birth.

Because there was no real support for families in the area, she decided to do something about it.

The group provides memory boxes to six hospitals located in Brevard and Indian River County to help preserve the memory of the child for grieving families in similar situations. It includes a photo album, a handprint kit, materials to make a hand cast, a container for locks of hair and comfort items such as a teddy bear, a blanket, a beaded bracelet and a scented candle.

The group also refers families to support groups, and Hardin herself has talked to parents across the country about her experience.

Though the hospitals usually pass out the boxes, it's not unusual for her to deliver them in person.

"They're very grateful because ... this isn't some

factory-made kit," she said.

"There's a lot of love put into it, a lot of care. Our group hand makes a lot of the items in there (and) all the parents get together and we pack them. Each box comes with a handwritten letter by a parent who has had a loss. They really appreciate that somebody would think about their baby."

Tickets for the charity event are \$12 at the door, or \$10 in advance for adults. Children ages 3 to 12 are admitted for \$5 and children 2 and younger are not charged. Advance tickets may be purchased at cupcakestogether.com between now and the day before the event.

It certainly promises to be a fun, frosting-filled day. ☺



VIERA VOICE courtesy of Cherishing the Journey

Cherishing the Journey provides memory boxes like this one to families grieving from the loss of an infant.

Spare change helps babies thrive

SPECIAL TO VIERA VOICE

A total of \$7,500 was generated through a special Mother's Day baby-bottle fundraising campaign launched by St. John the Evangelist Council of Catholic Women. Proceeds will benefit the work of Pregnancy Resources, a non-profit organization that provides free services, education and support to women and families facing unexpected pregnancy.

"It is amazing to see how spare change can add up to make a big difference," said Judy Miller, executive director of Pregnancy Resources. "We are very thankful to the Council of Catholic Women at St. John the Evangelist who worked diligently on this fundraiser, counting every penny, nickel, dime and quarter to help the clients we serve. It is because of generous volunteers and community support that our programs and services are provided



VIERA VOICE Photo

St. John the Evangelist Council of Catholic Women collected 321 pounds of coins in 400 baby bottles totaling \$7,500.

free of charge."

Pregnancy Resources offers free medical-grade pregnancy tests, limited obstetric ultrasounds, accurate information, material assistance, pregnancy and parenting education classes and community referrals in a

compassionate environment.

Located on the same property, the Baby Mart Resale Store offers gently-used baby necessities at discount prices to serve clients and the public. For more information about Pregnancy Resources, call 321-752-5540 or go to melbournepri.com. ☺



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