

Baby blanket drive supports hospital's perinatal loss program

BY TRISHA WALKER
News staff writer

Cameron Teems, RNC-OB, Family Birth Center nurse at Providence Hood River Memorial Hospital, is organizing a special collection of baby blankets April 13-17.

Special, because the blankets will be given to parents who have lost a baby through miscarriage, stillbirth or neonatal death as a memorial keepsake.

The drive is a collaboration between the Sweet Pea Project (sweetpeaproject.org), which collects baby blankets to give to grieving parents, and Providence Hood River Memorial Hospital's Family Birth Center — and is the first time PHRMH has collected blankets for this purpose.

Teems has, however, worked with the Sweet Pea Project in the past, receiving blankets for the hospital's perinatal loss program. Previously, the Sweet Pea Project collected blankets nationwide to send to hospitals across the country, but has recently changed its focus to collecting blankets at a local level.

As explained on the project's website, "Newly bereaved parents will receive blankets donated by their neighbors. We hope this will help foster a sense of commu-

nity for the bereaved, and offer connections during those awfully isolating first weeks of grief."

For PHRMH, it's another way to care for patients dealing with loss.

"Most of our support materials for our inpatients

are purchased through the Foundation, where they have a special fund that was set up specifically for perinatal loss by a family that experienced their own loss," Teems said.

"However, there are many organizations, like the Sweet Pea Project, that create ways for families who have lost a baby to reach out to others going through the same thing." Because the blankets will be collected at the hospital, most will go to inpatients

there. "However, we will offer blankets to families in our community who have suffered a loss elsewhere and perhaps did not receive any type of keepsakes or memorial items to help them remember their baby," she

hearts break for you because they have also experienced the death of their precious baby," said Teems. "Donating blankets, or anything else, in honor of the baby lost, in hopes of helping someone else, can be very healing and part of recovery from the grief.

"The process of going in to the hospital and giving birth to a child you do not get to take home is so difficult," said Teems. "You are overcome with a mix of emotions, but most often are just in a state of shock and numbness.

"As nurses, it is upon us to provide as many opportunities as we can for the families to hold and spend time with their baby, and create keepsakes for them to take home. As the patient, you are not always aware of how important it is, yet, to have each and every keepsake and photo that was taken."

That perspective comes with time. "As you go through the grieving process, each and every little thing becomes a

connection to your baby," said Teems. "Having a blanket, something tangible to hold on to, that was wrapped around your baby is so meaningful and will forever be something that helps you feel close to the memory of your baby that died."

The drive is for new blankets only because, The Sweet Pea Project says, "We want each special blanket to belong to one child and nobody else." Blankets can be of any size — "Babies can be very small to a full-term newborn size," said Teems — and made from flannel, fleece, cotton or other similar material.

"Handmade blankets are welcome but we request no knitted or crocheted blankets because the fibers can disturb the baby's delicate skin, causing tears and abrasions," she said.

Teems has a special connec-

tion with the blanket drive, both as a nurse and as a mother who has lost a child.

"As a nurse, who has also been a patient and suffered the loss of a baby, I know how important it is to have these keepsakes," said Teems. "As time passes, my memories fade, but I still have these items that help me to cope with losing him. My keepsakes have become treasures that help keep the memory of him close."

To donate, bring a new baby blanket to Providence Hood River Memorial Hospital between April 13 and 17 — there will be a large collection barrel in the main entrance. Parents who have not received a tangible keepsake of a lost child can email Teems at Cameron.Teems@providence.org for more information on obtaining a blanket of their own.



Photo by Trisha Walker

PROVIDENCE HOOD RIVER Memorial Hospital's Family Birth Center is collecting new baby blankets as part of their perinatal loss program. Cameron Teems, RNC-OB, Family Birth Center nurse, said the blankets will be given to parents who have lost a baby through miscarriage, stillbirth or neonatal death as a memorial keepsake.

Each donated blanket will have a small note attached explaining its purpose: "That it was carefully chosen and donated through the Sweet Pea Project by families whose

SUPPORT GROUP MEETS MONTHLY

Teems has started and facilitates the Columbia Gorge Pregnancy and Infant Loss Support Group, monthly at River of Life Assembly; the next meeting will take place April 7 from 6-7 p.m. and will feature speaker Patricia

Varga, founder of Women with Wings Foundation, who will discuss the Create to Heal program. The support group is for women, age 18 and older, who have lost a child from miscarriage, ectopic, stillbirth or neonatal death.

Bowl for Kids' Sake raises funds, awareness

Big bowlers, Little bowlers and bowlers in between made a difference at Bowl for Kids' Sake 2015 on Saturday, March 14. The event grossed more than \$55,000, almost half of the Big Brothers Big Sisters' annual budget.

A good time was had by all as more than 300 bowlers and volunteers celebrated in support of Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Columbia Gorge (BBBS). Teams from The Dalles, Hood River, White Salmon and around the region collected donations in support of BBBS's mentoring programs.

Bowlers at Orchard Lanes celebrated their efforts with a bowling party complete with cake, pizza and prizes. Dozens of businesses, agencies and individuals participated in the annual event as sponsors and bowling teams. New teams participating in this year's event included Key Bank of Hood River, The City of Hood River, Wasco County's Split Ends, CGCC's Five Star

Turkey Rackers and Klickitat Lyle Against Substance Abuse Coalition.

The Beneventi's Pizza team took top fundraising honors with a total contribution of \$8,100, followed by Hood River Construction, which raised \$6,320.

Tim Sweeney, owner of Hood River Construction, was the top individual fundraiser with \$5,285 thanks to donations from local contractors and suppliers.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Columbia Gorge currently serves 80 children in Hood River, Wasco and western Klickitat Counties matched with caring, screened and trained volunteer mentors.

To find out more about Big Brothers Big Sisters, contact Justine Ziegler at 541-436-0309 or go to: www.nextdoorinc.org.



Photo by Ray Perkins

RAY PERKINS PHOTOGRAPHY donated time all day to get photos of every team. Ray's favorite photo features one of four Leos teams: Cleo Koerner, left, Hannah Simons, Cayla Sacre, Elizabeth Bailey and Claire Oswald.

THE AWARD-WINNING PRINT & ONLINE FAMILY FEATURE

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MONEY MATTERS

What to do?

Each of these kids need some advice from YOU. Read each story and write down your advice. Talk about your advice with a parent. Do they agree with you?

Savings Shortage

David is trying to save money to buy a new LEGO set that costs \$29.00. Each Friday, he gets an allowance of \$5.00 from his mom and dad.

David tries to save at least \$3.00 every week. He spends about \$2.00 when he visits the video arcade on Sunday afternoons. But sometimes he'll spend more than he planned to trying to top his best score.

Q: What can David do to save the \$29.00 faster?
A: _____

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A: _____

Sticky Problem

Evan collects stickers from the grocery store vending machine. Each costs 50¢. He buys one each time his family shops, which is usually three times a week.

Evan earns \$3.00 a week pulling weeds in his neighbor's yard, so he spends half of his money each week on stickers and saves the rest in his piggy bank.

The grocery store just replaced the old sticker machine with a new one. The stickers are bigger, but they cost \$1.00 each. If he buys three, he'll spend all his money every week.

Q: What should Evan do to keep saving some money each week?
A: _____

Bike Lane Pain

Maria walks and feeds her Aunt Meridith's dog, Zinger, every day after school. Maria gets \$2.00 per day for taking such good care of Zinger.

Maria wants a new bike that costs \$75. If she saved all her money each week, she could buy the bike in about two months. But Maria downloads music from her favorite bands at \$1.30 per song a couple times a week. She also buys a smoothie for \$3.95 on Saturdays with her friend Katie. Sometimes they go to a movie, which costs \$7.00 per ticket.

Q: What advice would you give Maria about how to reach her goal of buying that new bike?
A: _____

Extra! Extra! The Bucks Add Up!

Look through the newspaper for prices. Can you find five or more prices, that when added together equal \$100? Now try to find prices in the newspaper that add up to \$1,000. What's the largest amount you can reach?

Standards Link: Math: Compute sums up to 1,000.

Write On! My Savings Story

Write about something you'd like to buy. Why do you want it? Then write about your plan to save money to buy it.

Standards Link: Research: Use the newspaper to locate information.

Kid Scoop Puzzler

Mario and Maya are selling their toys at a yard sale to raise money for their local fire department. Oops! Someone dripped lemonade on the sales slips. Can you fill in the missing numbers?

Blocks \$1.3	Golf Ball	Bat \$
Puppet 5	Postcard .05	Paints \$
Book .30	Puzzle .70	Clay \$2.00
Total: \$2.41	Total: 85	Total: \$9.00

TOTAL RAISED: _____

Standards Link: Number Sense: Students compute sums and differences with money. Algebra: Solve number sentences that express relationships involving addition and subtraction.

Double Double Word Search

ALLOWANCE Find the words in the puzzle. Then look for each word in this week's Kid Scoop stories and activities.

GROCERY

PROBLEM

FASTER

COUPLE

ARCADE

MUSIC

EARNs

EQUAL

MONEY

SCORE

COST

PAIN

GOAL

BIKE

E	M	O	G	N	P	E	E	T
C	Y	M	R	R	R	K	S	A
N	C	T	E	T	O	I	O	E
A	N	I	T	C	B	C	R	S
W	S	I	S	O	L	O	E	N
O	N	S	A	U	E	U	G	R
L	A	V	F	P	M	P	O	A
L	A	U	Q	E	I	L	A	E
A	R	C	A	D	E	E	L	G

Standards Link: Letter sequencing. Recognized identical words. Skim and scan reading. Recall spelling patterns.

Kid Scoop Together: Cause and Effect

Understanding cause and effect helps improve problem-solving skills. Read the stories about Evan, David and Maria. Find a cause and an effect in each story. We have done one for you.

EVAN

CAUSE: The cost of Evan's stickers has gone up.

EFFECT: He can't save any money if he buys the usual amount.

DAVID

CAUSE: _____

EFFECT: _____

MARIA

CAUSE: _____

EFFECT: _____

Now Try This ...

Find an article in today's newspaper. Identify the cause and effect. Have your parents read the article and see if they agree with the cause and effect you found.

Standards Link: Research: Use the newspaper to locate information.