

Big Brothers, Big Sisters raise funds, spread awareness

Written by By Tom Hartsock Sun Correspondent
Friday, 20 May 2016 09:11



The Ninth Annual Bowl for Kids' Sake event was held on May 30 at Gal-A-Bowl and was again a big success, according to Sarah Piano, the Regional Director for McKinley County of the Big Brothers, Big Sisters organization. The theme for this year's event was 50's Rock and Roll and the 46 teams entered raised a total of \$33,872.88 and additional sponsorships brought in another \$25,500. And more is still coming in to increase the total.

Considering the five agencies statewide raised \$184,937 this year, Gallup's share of almost 30 percent of that total is very telling. Truth is, this area always contributes well to a worthy cause!

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The teams must raise \$100 per bowler - \$500 per team – to gain entry and most raise much more than the minimum. Top honors for fundraising went to Washington Federal with \$3,100. Awards are based on the amount raised, not on individual or team scores.

This is one of the happiest events you will come across in Gallup, with many participating in dressing up for the occasion and just laughing throughout the entire session in which they are assigned.

Of course there is a more serious side as Big Brothers, Big Sisters attempts to fill a parental void in some 112 McKinley County kids' lives, whether they are 5-years old or 15. There are both Community-based and School-based mentors that provide low cost and safe activities where educational backgrounds do not matter.

Community-based mentors are required to sign up for one year and spend 2-4 hours every month with their assigned child, while school mentors usually see their children during lunch hour or to help with homework.

“We had a few volunteers sign up at the event to become mentors, which is wonderful,” said the effervescent Sarah. “We want people to know that there is a strong need for mentors in our community because there are many young people looking for positive guidance in their life.”

There are background checks required by all applicants to this program with three parts to each one: Felony, Auto (last 5 years), and Sex Offender checks. The good news on that front is that BBBS will pay for these checks, if you pass, and with 22 children on a waiting list currently (half boys, half girls) applicants should complete the paperwork at the offices on the corner of First St. and Aztec as soon as possible.

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