



THE POST

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Caraway Street is a popular event at Dallas Baptist



FOR THE POST/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

The Caraway Street teaches life lessons to children in kindergarten through fourth grade.



"The support I've gotten from my family, my girlfriend, and friends has been great. It's been extremely tough on my parents. They feel helpless."

- Chris Crawford

Needing a miracle

Area kids get into the act

By DAVE KONOPKI
Post Editor

Stage puppets like these are regular characters at Caraway Street at the Dallas Baptist Church.

◆ IF YOU GO

The Dallas Baptist Church's Caraway Street Theater program is held at 6:30 p.m. each Wednesday for children in grades kindergarten through fourth grade. There is no admission charge. For more information, call the church at 639-5099.

Each semester lasts nine weeks and the current one runs through Dec. 14.

"When we started the program, we had one child in the (kindergarten through fourth grade) age group," said Branch. "From March through the end of May we had about 40 kids. It's been very successful in reaching young people."

And their parents, who sometimes sit in the back of the church and enjoy the 1 hour, 15 minute show.

Although several families have started coming to church because of the program, Boudreaux made it clear the goal wasn't to lure visiting children or their families away from other churches.

"We tell the kids that if you attend a different church, go there," she said. "If you don't attend a church, you're welcome here."

Shannon Redmond and her family moved to the Wyoming Valley from North Carolina al-

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DALLAS - The Rev. Jerry Branch cringed when he heard about the new children's ministry being considered by the church where he was preparing to take over the pastoral duties.

"I thought, 'oh no, not another puppet program,'" said Branch, pastor of the Dallas Baptist Church on Route 415.

"I was very skeptical, but they were excited about it. So, I met with the creator (Ron Solomon of Texas) and learned more about the program.

"Puppets can be really boring. This isn't."

The program, Caraway Street Theater, is designed to teach young children how to develop life skills on a biblical basis, said Branch.

The interactive program for children in kindergarten through fourth grade is held at 6:30 p.m. each Wednesday at the church.

"Each week, we try to teach the children some aspect of living the Christian life," said director Melba Boudreaux, a longtime church member who first learned about the Caraway Street program at a children's camp.

"For example, we might do something about cheating in school. The kids learn morals and lessons they can take with them to school. They're not just sitting there and listening. They interact with the puppets and the actors. We have so much fun."

And it's been successful.

Despite competing with a plethora of youth sports, video games, and dozens of television channels, interest in the Caraway Street program has grown since it was introduced to the church in March.

The program has three semesters a year, much like a school calendar.



PHOTOS FOR THE POST/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

Chris Crawford spends some time with the family dog, Odie.

◆ IF YOU CAN HELP

If you would like more information about donating a kidney, contact the National Kidney Foundation at www.kidney.org or call Crawford at 570-814-9250.

L-L graduate Chris Crawford needs a kidney transplant

By DAVE KONOPKI
Post Editor

ROSS TOWNSHIP - Chris Crawford doesn't feel sorry for himself. He doesn't want to. And, to be quite honest, he doesn't have the time.

After all, while many young people his age are primarily focused on climbing the corporate ladder or spending time with friends, the Lake-Lehman High School graduate spends much of his time thinking about vastly different things.

Like renal failure. Dialysis treatments. Neck catheters.

And finding a new kidney.

The 24-year-old son of Leonard and Shirley Crawford is hoping to find a kidney donor - five months after an attempted transplant from his girlfriend failed.

"It's been tough, but I've never felt sorry for myself," said Crawford, who moved to Hackensack, N.J. to begin a new job as a field engineer.

"In fact, it gives me the drive to keep going. The support I've gotten from my family, my girlfriend, and friends has been great. It's been extremely tough on my parents. They feel helpless."

His girlfriend of more than five years, 23-year-old Jennifer Kocher, took a giant step toward trying to help Crawford in May. Kocher donated one of her kidneys to him, but the transplant failed in less than 24 hours.

"The kidney got a blood clot and died inside of me," said Crawford, who graduated from Lake-Lehman in 1999 and from Penn State/Wilkes-Barre two years ago. "My urine output stopped and I gained 20 pounds overnight. They took me right back into the operating room to remove it."

The failure defied the odds. Doctors had told Crawford approximately 99.8 percent of all

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TIMES LEADER STAFF PHOTO/FRAD ADAMS

Cindie Banks joins her daughter Katrina and son Dakota to make a scarecrow in Noxen.

Pumpkin patch offers a weekend of fun

Hayrides, a corn maze and the chance to make a scarecrow add up to fun

By GENELLE HOBAN
Post Correspondent

NOXEN - With hayrides, a corn maze, plenty of pumpkins and the chance to make your own scarecrow, the Whistle Pig Pumpkin Patch is a popular stop for Back Mountain residents.

A Dallas family liked the ex-

perience so much last year, they came back again this year.

Lisa and Ted Kocher and their two children, Nicholas, 5, and Julia, 3, took a hayride around the patch on a bright and sunny Sunday afternoon.

"We had the best time here last year," Ted said as his daughter with white blonde hair and bright blue eyes sat on his lap. "Nick loves jumping off the haystacks."

Ted and Nicholas walked into a tiny opening between the tall tan cornstalks.

Finding the way through the 4-acre corn maze designed by Joel Field, owner of the patch, wouldn't be easy. The attempt cost them \$3 each.

Lisa and Julia, however, decided not to go through the maze. Instead, they tromped through the patch filled with pumpkins and gourds.

They finally settled on some various-shaped orange and green gourds and a medium-sized pumpkin.

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