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6th Annual Larry & Kathy Jones Family H.O.P.E. Campaign Fundraiser

APRIL 05TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

6th Annual Larry & Kathy Jones Family H.O.P.E. Campaign Fundraiser

Bloomfield, Missouri - The 6th Annual Larry and Kathy Jones Family H.O.P.E. Campaign has kicked off their 2017 fundraising event with proceeds directly benefiting area cancer patients.

The HOPE Campaign was initially established by the Jones family from Bloomfield in memory of Larry Jones in 2011 following his death. Last year, Larry's wife, Kathy, died of cancer. The family decided following their mother's death to rename the charity to include the name of Kathy Jones.

"It's hard to believe we're nearing the 6 month mark of when we lost our beloved mother," commented Lora Galati, " Mom loved the H.O.P.E. Campaign, and looked forward to the annual fundraiser each spring. Well, here we are, and it's that time again! In past years, we've held fish fries, raffles, sold pork loins and more. This year, our primary fundraiser will be t-shirt sales."

"When we lost Mom this past August we renamed the charity: Larry & Kathy Jones Family H.O.P.E. Campaign. This year, our new t-shirts reflect our new name. The design idea came easily this year. We used a photo that we took from our parents' farm the afternoon that our mother passed away. The sky was absolutely beautiful and so peaceful that day. There were three distinct sunrays, which are significant for us; we continue this Campaign of Healing, Optimism, Prayer and Example to honor the memories of Dad, Mom and our sister, Sara. We hope you like the new t-shirts, and we hope you'll consider

supporting the H.O.P.E. Campaign this year as we continue to raise prayers, funds and hope for area cancer warriors and individuals faced with life-threatening illnesses," commented Galati.

The shirts sell for \$15 each and are available in sizes small - 6XL. Sizes from 2XL - 6XL are \$18 each. Children sizes are also available.

Further information may be obtained through emailing larrybjoneshopecampaign@yahoo.com or call (314) 402-7777. Find them on Facebook by clicking [HERE](#).

"This is our small way of giving back! We celebrate H.O.P.E. ~ Healing, Optimism, Prayer and Example," continued Galati.

Since March of 2011, this charity has raised over \$83,000 for area cancer warriors and individuals faced with life-threatening illness.

The H.O.P.E. Campaign is a division of 18 FORE Life, a 501(c)(3) charity, with a shared mission of benefiting area cancer warriors and individuals faced with life-threatening illness.

To date, 18 FORE Life has sent out over \$1,900,000.00 in love offerings to families all over Southeast Missouri. The generous donations and support to the charity have truly made a difference. But, there's "more work to do!"

Photo by Julie Dodd Photography.

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Missouri Youth Catch the Wave of Leadership at Teen Conference

APRIL 04TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Missouri Youth Catch the Wave of Leadership at Teen Conference

Columbia, Missouri - Butler and Stoddard County 4-H'ers discovered last weekend that energy abounds when 366 people gather to help 11-13 year old students build leadership skills.

"I had an absolute blast," said professional speaker Camille Yameen, who spoke at the MU Extension 4-H Teen Conference. "Nothing is more inspiring for me than seeing youth excited about their own leadership potential."

Attending the two-day Teen Conference were Blaine Birdsong, Jo Schalk, Emily Johns and Braxton Huey. These young delegates joined youth from 66 other counties to build leadership, gain new skills, and learn ways they can help their community.

"Leadership skills are a solid foundation for success, even for careers that haven't been invented yet," said Bradd Anderson, State 4-H Youth Development Specialist for MU Extension who coordinates the event. "Teen Conference brings the thrill of independence in a safe, warm, and inclusive atmosphere, and there's a confidence that comes from that." The daytime schedule included festivities at the Columbia Expo Center and educational workshops on the MU campus, planned and led by the older teens of Missouri's State 4-H Council. Workshops included making chew toys for homeless pets from discarded t-shirts, learning about the strengths of different personality types, and mastering new dance moves. Evening events included a dance, movie, and the opportunity to become "soil sleuths" through the 2017 National 4-H Ag Innovators Healthy Soils CSI project, sponsored by National 4-H Council and Monsanto. These

sleuths studied soil composition, investigated the impact of tilling on the larger soil ecosystem and built scale model no-till planters to find solutions for keeping good soils from going bad.

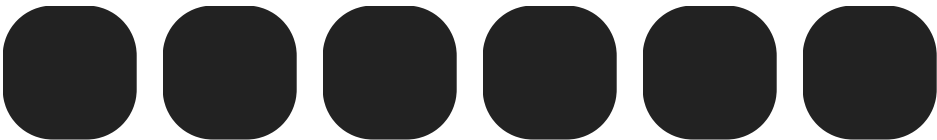
Teen Conference is planned each year by the State 4-H Council, a group of 38 older teens who serve as ambassadors for the organization and play leadership roles throughout the event. “4-H offers young people a positive life trajectory that includes role models, citizenship, and lifelong learning,” said 4-H Youth Development Specialist, Stephanie Milner. “As Teen Conference delegates see these positive older teens in active leadership roles, they realize that they can be leaders too.” Several adults noted enthusiasm for the youth-led component of Teen Conference. ”The students were energetic, eager to learn and loved participating in the program,” said Yameen. “With leaders like the ones in Missouri 4-H, the future is most definitely bright."

Missouri 4-H is open to all children ages 5-18. For more information, visit <http://4h.missouri.edu> or contact your local MU Extension Center at 573-686-8064 or 6573-568-3344.

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Local Students Earn Awards at State Competition

APRIL 03RD 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Local Students Earn Awards at State Competition

Sikeston, Missouri - The Health Occupation students from Sikeston Career and Technology Center recently competed in the State HOSA competition at Rolla, Missouri.

The Community Awareness team placed 1st and the Health Education team placed 2nd.

Both teams won scholarships from Johnson and Johnson Corp and will advance to the Nationals at Disney in Orlando Florida this June.

The students are pictured above from left to right: Hana Razor, Karleigh Jenkins, Lauren Housman, Hallie Kimball, and Allison Sneed.

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Candidate Ben Worley for Dexter School Board

MARCH 31ST 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Candidate Ben Worley for Dexter School Board

Dexter, Missouri - There are five candidates for three positions in the 2017 Dexter School Board election to be held on April 4, 2017. A bio was submitted on each candidate. Below is the bio for Mr. Ben Worley.

Occupation: Financial Advisor, Edward Jones Investments

Personal Education History: Dexter High School (1994), Murray State University (1998, B.S. – Finance), AAMS designation from the College of Financial Planning.

Community Service Activities/Affiliations: Current member and past President of the Dexter Chamber of Commerce, Logistics Chairman for the Stoddard County Relay for Life, Trustee and Deacon at Liberty Hill General Baptist Church and former Chairman of the Church's finance/budget committee, member of the Dexter Community Tourism Advisory Committee. Former board member of the Stoddard County Transit Service and the Dexter Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.

Why do you want to serve as a school board member?

It is my desire to serve as a school board member to give back to the institution and community that had a profound effect on the person I am today. The majority of my immediate family members are graduates of the Dexter school system and now our daughter, Emma attends fifth grade at Central Elementary. I feel we have a strong school district with caring and professional educators and staff that offers our students many opportunities. My goal if elected to the Dexter School Board would be to work in a positive manner with other board members, school staff and the community in general to ensure that no matter a student's ability, we are always improving the opportunity we offer each of them to be successful in life after their high school career.

What qualities will you bring to the school board that will benefit the students and staff of the Dexter Public Schools?

I feel that I have a good ability to work with others in achieving goals that are important to the entire group. I have had the privilege to serve on a number of boards and committees in which numerous fiscal, budgetary, policy and staffing decisions had to be made each year. I also feel the experience I have gained through my professional career would serve as a benefit in how the Board of Education makes ongoing decisions for our district in allocating resources in the most effective way to positively impact our students, staff and the Dexter community in general.

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Candidate Jason Comfort for Dexter School Board

MARCH 30TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Candidate Jason Comfort for Dexter School Board

Dexter, Missouri - There are five candidates for three positions in the 2017 Dexter School Board election to be held on April 4, 2017. A bio was submitted on each candidate.

Below is the bio for Mr. Jason Comfort.

Occupation: Countywide Insurance – Insurance Producer; Pallet Recycling, LLC

Family Members: Cristi, Maci (7th grade), Cali (3rd grade), and Jase (pre-k)

Personal Education History: Dexter High School class of 1996; Three Rivers Community College; Southeast Missouri State University

Community Service Activities/Affiliations: First Baptist Church of Dexter, Past President of Dexter Chamber of Commerce, Past President of Hidden Trails Country Club, Past Board Member of Dexter Bearcat Booster Club, Past Board Member of the Missouri Association of Insurance Agents, 19 years of service Dexter Little League Football, 15+ years radio broadcast Dexter Bearcat Football

Why do you want to serve as a school board member?

I Love the Dexter Bearcats! I am extremely passionate about all things related to the Dexter Bearcats. I was blessed with many great mentors throughout my life who exemplified what it meant to be a Dexter Bearcat. I watched them serve this community in a selfless manner while working tirelessly to positively impact our students. Since the first day I came home from college, I have been vigorously working to mirror their example and sought different ways that I could positively impact and improve our community and our schools. I have worked diligently to discover new ways to better our students experience both in the classroom and in a wide variety of extra-curricular activities. I have always had a strong belief that “Attitude Reflects Leadership.” I want to continue my efforts to provide leadership and elevate my position in this great community so that I can play an even larger role in raising the Dexter school system to a higher level of excellence and achievements.

What qualities will you bring to the school board that will benefit the students and staff of Dexter Public Schools?

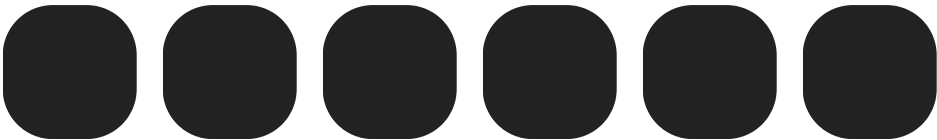
1. Common-sense leadership
2. Strong interpersonal skills to work within a board effectively
3. Passion for excellence in our school and community
4. An understanding of the role of a school board member and the school board as a whole
5. Ability to communicate the board’s vision and mission and serve as a bridge between the school and community
6. Commitment to positively impact our students in every vote I cast

- 7. Willingness and commitment to vote in the minority, if I believe that is what is right! However, if I am on the losing side of a vote, we are still one board, one team, one school, one community and I will support the decision that was passed by the majority.
- 8. Willingness to listen and learn from all stakeholders before making decisions

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