



COMMUNITY NEWS, LOCAL NEWS

Boys connect at club during 'Dudes' Night Out'

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Matthew Ottani Sr., center, and his son Jacob, right, watch as Matthew Ottani Jr. makes a shot in pool at 'Dudes Night Out' at the Boys and Girls Club of Bristol Family Center on West Street last Friday. (Photo by Janelle Morelli)

TAYLOR MURCHISON-GALLAGHER

STAFF WRITER

The Boys and Girls Club of Bristol Family Center hosted its annual March event, "Dudes Night Out" on Friday, March 22.

The event at the main club house on West Street offered activities such as foosball, a bounce house, air hockey, and more to fathers and father-figures, and the young men in their lives.

Newly appointed councilor Scott Rosado attended with a young man that he has mentored for several years.

“It brings the community together,” said Rosado. “It creates a bonding time with the fathers, the sons, and even if it’s not a father, the mentor that’s overlooking them. It’s just an exceptional experience, it’s amazing.”

Roman Rubina and his son Andres said they attended because they wanted to spend a night together having fun.

The Carbone family, Eric, Bradley, and Tyler, attended for their first time.

“It’s great to see so many fathers here with their kids on a weekend night,” said Eric Carbone. “It brings the community together and all the kids together, they get to see friends from school, and it’s fun for everyone to come out and enjoy.”

Fun and games were not the only things highlighted during the evening. Representatives from the Men and Boy’s Fund (housed at the Main Street Community Foundation) advisory board, attended in order to spread awareness of what they can offer to the community.

Board chair Rodger Stotz said the fund was created almost three years ago “in response to the many needs that are going unmet in the communities for men and boys.” Board member Chris Amorosino said the mission of the fund is “to help men and boys become more self-sufficient.”

The Men and Boys Fund can offer services in two distinct ways program grants, which have aided programs such as the Boys and Girls Club’s Passport to Manhood, Bristol Youth Service’s Skills to Pay the Bills program, or the Bristol Hospital Parent and Child Center Full Circle program, which allows single fathers in the community to come together and share stories of their experience.

They also offer immediate response funding, such as collaborating with the Women and Girl’s Fund to donate \$400 to the alternative education program, allowing them to replace a stove that had stopped working.

The Men and Boy’s Fund also was promoting its upcoming event, Family, Fun and Fathers, which will be held on Friday, June 14, at Lessard Lanes, 136 New Britain Ave., Plainville. Tickets must be purchased in advance, no later than Friday, June 7. Tickets are \$20 for the first adult, \$15 for the first child, and \$10 each for each additional family member. Tickets can be purchased by contacting MSCF’s scholarship and project officer, Samantha Rajotte, by phone, (860) 583-6363, or by email at samantha@mainstreetfoundation.org.

To comment on this story or to contact staff writer Taylor Murchison-Gallagher, email her at TMurchison@BristolObserver.com.

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