

Posted Online: Feb. 08, 2013, 8:30 am

Dodgeball for Diapers tournaments benefit Bethany

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MOLINE -- Diapers kept piling up at Bethany for Children and Families last week, thanks to a Catholic Schools Week activity.

Some students also won the right to change out of their school uniforms for a day.

Four Scott County Catholic elementary schools and Assumption High School in Davenport sponsored "Dodgeball for Diapers" tournaments last week, as part of the national Catholic Schools Week observance.

Tournament winners at each school and students who collected the most diapers won the uniform-free privileges, Assumption Principal Bridget Murphy said.

"At Assumption, we collected just short of 12,000 diapers and \$1,000 in cash to buy more," Ms. Murphy said.

When students delivered the diapers to Bethany in Moline, "it was a riot," communications coordinator Joscelyn Stone said. "It was pretty exciting and was truly a blessing. We have never received a donation of diapers on this scale. It was tremendous."

"When all was said and done, it was a wonderful thing," Ms. Murphy said. "We had a lot of fun Friday playing dodgeball, and were able to mix the celebration with a service project that served a greater purpose."

"It's one thing for students to raise money for good causes, but by having them bring in diapers, they got a wonderful sense of what they can actually accomplish when they pool their resources," she said.

"The sheer volume of donations showed them that we can do something fun, while still donating to a worthy cause. You could say they dodged the ball, but didn't dodge that greater purpose."

Ms. Murphy met with principals at All Saints, Our Lady of Lourdes, John F. Kennedy and St. Paul the Apostle Catholic schools to plan the annual Catholic Schools Week service project. The five schools, including the five K-8 feeder schools, have a total enrollment of about 1,890 students, she said.



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Photo: John Greenwood

Joscelyn Stone, community coordinator for Bethany for Children & Families, stands among some of the thousands of diapers the organization received on Monday, Feb. 4, 2013. They are being donated by Scott County Catholic Schools, as part of National Catholic Schools Week last week. The schools hosted 'Dodgeball for Diapers' tournaments to raise money to buy diapers for Bethany.

Some of the schools required students to donate diapers for tournament entry, and others asked students to pay \$3, which was used to buy diapers.

Altogether, the schools collected more than 19,000 diapers and just under \$1,800 to buy more, Ms. Murphy said.

"It was so kind of the Catholic schools to do this for us," Ms. Stone said. "It's a lot of diapers, but we'll find a home for all of them. We'll make sure any of our families who need diapers get them."