

# Families fight cancer through Fun Night at Wyandot

- By Nicole Tuttle For MediaNews Group  
The Macomb Daily



Wyandot Middle School in Clinton Township will host a Relay For Life Family Fun Night on March 1 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Funds raised will benefit the American Cancer Society.

NICOLE TUTTLE FOR THE MACOMB DAILY



Mekayla Whaley, a seventh grade student at Wyandot Middle School, initiated reviving the school's Relay For Life Family Fun Night.

PHOTO COURTESY OF WYANDOT MIDDLE SCHOOL

**On March 1, a Relay For Life Family Fun Night will be held at Wyandot Middle School in Clinton Township.**

A Wyandot Middle School tradition of fighting cancer through a Family Fun Night was recently revived thanks to the efforts of seventh grader Mekayla Whaley.

Wyandot teacher Kathleen Myers, who sponsors the Clinton Township school's Relay For Life Team, said the Family Fun Night was a school tradition that died out as a Relay For Life fundraiser over the past few years.

"This year, one of my members, Mekayla Whaley, asked if she could plan a Family Fun Night and we were able to get the fundraiser approved," Myers said.

Whaley wanted to bring back the fun night to create greater awareness for the relay cause.

"I feel like it makes people more aware, and also in a fun way. It can be fun for everybody, all types of ages," Whaley said.

The event will be held at the school March 1 from 6-8 p.m. Wyandot Middle School is located on Garfield Road, north of 17 Mile Road. Cost to attend is \$5 per person. Children ages four and under are free.

Activities will take place in the school gym and include interactive inflatables for all ages, games and music. Whaley's uncle, Joe Davey of Party Dreams Rental in Madison Heights, will donate inflatables for the event. Some games will include an inflatable obstacle course, Sumo suits for wrestling and a bean bag toss. Concessions will be available for purchase.

"We are hoping to raise several hundred dollars at this event," Myers said.

All proceeds of the event will benefit the Wyandot Relay For Life team in its efforts for Clinton Township Relay For Life. The team hosts several fundraisers, including an upcoming dodgeball game on March 22. This school year, the Wyandot Middle School Relay For Life team has about 80 members, Myers said. Students who have moved up to the high school level in the Chippewa Valley Schools district are welcome to join the team also, but many of these students choose to start their own teams, Myers said.

"We've raised around \$20,000 for the Clinton Township Relay For Life event every year for the past 10 years," Myers said, adding this year's team would like to match this amount for the 2019 Relay.

Relay For Life is a team fundraising event for the American Cancer Society in which team members take turns walking around a track or path. Each event is six to 24 hours long, and each team must have a member on the track at all times to symbolize that cancer never sleeps. Teams also set up themed campsites at the event.

The Clinton Township Relay For Life event is scheduled to be held on May 18-19 from 10 a.m. until 8 a.m. at Chippewa Valley High School's Ninth Grade Center in Clinton Township. The overall fundraising goal is \$100,000. This year will mark the 18th Relay For Life event in Clinton Township according to April Busch, the community development manager for the ACS North Central Region.

Busch said that in general, the Relay For Life of Clinton Township draws between 400-500 participants or 30 to 35 teams.

Wyandot has had a team in Clinton Township Relay For Life since 2004. The team was initiated by Wyandot teacher BethAnn Donnenwerth.

"She had participated in Relay For Life before and wanted to share this great experience with our students," Myers said. "At the time, it was only seventh graders. I took over about 10 years ago because finding a cure for cancer is very important to me and to our school. I opened it up to eighth graders as well as seventh graders at that time."