

Turning tragedy into support for others

Paislee's Foundation helps families coping with loss

DUANE SHERRILL
Editor Smithville Review
Smithville, Tennessee

Tyler and Jessica Cripps know how it feel to lose a child to stillbirth and the mountain many families have to climb not only emotionally but economically. That's why they founded Paislee's Foundation that helps families who are going through a stillbirth loss up to three years of age. They held their fifth-annual craft and vendor event at the Alexandria Fairgrounds Saturday to help raise money to help those in need.

"I and my wife lost our child. She was still born at 32 weeks," he said of what began the foundation. "We were devastated and heart broke but we had an outpouring of support from the community."

We were thinking how could pay this back," he said. "My thinking was there's a lot of people out there that don't have the support we did. They don't have anyone to turn to. They don't have the funds to do anything."

Tyler said he and a buddy from work decided to start a 5K and donate the proceeds to a family that was going through the same thing as the Cripps' did. That grew into a 501c3, non-profit so contributions and income generated through it would be tax exempt.

"So far I think our total is 50 or 55 families we have helped who have lost children or lost due to still birth," he said, noting colored paper hanging the gazebo at the Alexandria craft and vendor fair. These bore the names of many of the children whose families have been helped by the foundation. "It makes us feel good to know they have someone to turn to."

Tyler pointed out that when they lost Paislee, they had enough money for the burial but could not afford the headstone to mark her grave.

"If it wasn't for people donating, it would have been forever us saving up money for her headstone," he said. "What we do is donate enough money to the families to cover the cost of the headstone. If nothing else they can have a headstone or memorial to their child."

Tyler said they help families nationwide. They have a website found at www.paisleesfoundation.org.



Susan Nokes makes jewelry at the Paislee Foundation Craft and Home Show Saturday afternoon at the fairgrounds.



Duane Sherrill photos
Tyler and Jennifer Cripps began the Paislee Foundation after their daughter was stillborn. The Foundation seeks to help others who have lost a child. The butterflies in the background bear the names of children's families they have helped. Saturday was the fifth-annual Craft and Home Show at the fairgrounds to benefit the foundation's work.



To Ember York it is Always Christmas. She had a booth at the event to benefit the Paislee Foundation.



Melanie Judkins sews letters on a top at the Paislee's Foundation Craft and Home Show Saturday.



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