

Kids Funfest & Safety Day



Lisa Hobbs photos

Ian Farris stopped to become acquainted with McMinnville Fire Department's Fire Pup, a mascot who stresses fire safety.

Annual event draws crowd to Civic Center

BY MARGARET HOBBS
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Warren County Youth Leadership and the city of McMinnville presented another fun and educational day geared toward families. The annual Kids Funfest and Safety Day was held last weekend on the grounds of the Civic Center with approximately 600 to 700 guests attending throughout the day.

The event was free to the public, with activities designed for children of all ages and abilities. Activities included four bounce houses, a dunk tank and an assortment of games. Children could be fingerprinted, get their face painted with a unique design, and even take a free book home.

A fireman cut-out was a popular spot for photos, with Fire Pup and Ollie the Otter making appearances.

Fifteen assorted vendors were on hand, presenting safety issues, educating about signs of drug and alcohol abuse, bullying and child abuse, as well as addressing children's health topics.

Safety-themed attractions included a display from McMinnville Fire Department, Warren County Ambulance Service, Tennessee Highway Patrol's roll-over simulator, the new meth task force truck, the DARE car and an interesting Tennessee Wildlife exhibit. Three life flight helicopters landed on the adjoining Cat Walker Field for guests to enjoy.

"We had a wonderful day with lots of people stopping by," said Leadership member Cassie Johnson. "We ended up giving away 400 hotdog meals, including a drink, a cookie and chips."

Organizers also gave away 100 T-shirts, snow cones and popcorn, as well as the giveaways provided by vendors.



Children received a special treat when three helicopters arrived. They were sent by Vanderbilt's LifeFlight, Erlanger's Life Force, and the independently owned Air Evac Lifeteam.



Jonathan Hutchings doesn't know what he wants to be when he grows up, but he did enjoy pretending to be a firefighter for a photo opportunity.



Annaleigh McDonald and Cayden Park received free fire hats from McMinnville Fire Department.



Four bounce houses were available for children to enjoy, and Kalle Rutledge seems to be having a good time.



Todd Veach gives his son, Grimm, a tour of the Funfest from the top of his shoulders.