

THE DAILY TIMES

FARMINGTON NEW MEXICO

Annual event raises money for Childhaven

By Kurt Madar kmadar@daily-times.com

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FARMINGTON — Bright colors, oil and watercolor, big and small, the paintings lining the walls of the Childhaven conference room are as diverse as the children that get sheltered by its walls.

And they reflect hope.

Farmington residents can purchase a piece of that hope while supporting the organization that seeks to make it possible.

Childhaven Foundation is hosting its annual fundraising auction Friday, and the centerpiece, or pieces, are a series of paintings by the very children the organization helps.

Proceeds go to support the daily operations of Childhaven, a non-profit shelter for abused and neglected children.

"We wanted to shift the focus of the auction to our mission," said Childhaven CEO Erin Hourihan. "Lifting

kids from crisis to hope."

The fact that art, like painting and writing, often is used for therapy makes Friday's auction more than just a fundraiser. Each piece of art sold represents a moment in which an abused or neglected child engaged in the act of hoping.

"When these kids got praised for their work, their faces just lit up," said organizer Jamie Church. "It only takes one moment like that to really make a difference."

While Childhaven holds an auction every year, this year's artwork largely is thanks to a 23-year-old Farmington man.

Local artist Kiko Monclova raised \$1,000 at a recent fundraiser he held at SNS Skateshop. Monclova donated all the money to Childhaven for art supplies.

"Honestly, I have a friend who lives

in LA who was doing something similar for orphans," Monclova said. "She invited me to be part of the show. On my plane ride back, I realized if I can go all the way to LA to do something like this, why not do it in my own community."

Monclova wasn't the only artist involved with the auction. Some of the pieces to be auctioned were collaborative efforts of Childhaven children, staff and local artists Michael Bulloch and Karen Ellsbury.

All three artists spent time working on the paintings



with the children.

"Kiko wanted those children to know they had something interesting to say, to express," Church said. "When he came in to help with the artwork, it really made the kids' day. Just one person can really make a difference."

It made a difference for Monclova, as well.

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"I was blown away," he said. "These are kids. They are really cool and you forget that they have nowhere to go."

Friday's auction may be centered around the children's paintings, but that won't be the only offering. Like in years past, the auction also will include donated items like recreation packages, train tickets and even a mint green amethyst pendant with matching earrings donated by Freytag & Farrar Jewelers.

"We only do two major fundraisers a year," Hourihan said. "We don't want to be out there constantly asking for money."

Childhaven receives federal and state funding, but the money earned from the auction is important for making ends meet.

"This year, more than ever, it allows us to do the basics," Hourihan said. "It is a very important supplement to our federal and state funding."

The fundraising event runs from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday at the Three Rivers Banquet Hall, 107 east Main Street. The actual auction begins at 6 p.m. with a pre-auction hour beginning at 5 p.m., including refreshments and featuring local guitarist Tanner Church.

For more information contact Jamie Church at (505) 325-5358 , ext. 120.

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