



The Hilltop Family YMCA will host an annual fundraiser Friday. Students Seth Fritsch, left, Jordan Mitchell, YMCA counselor Stephanie Seals, Skyler Correll, Paul Maxwell, Hayden Biggs and Zakary Floyd eat at the Hilltop YMCA's before-school program.

'Campaign for Kids' to help high-risk children efforts

BY STACY PARKER
CORRESPONDENT

OCEANFRONT — Kindergartners kept busy at the Hilltop Family YMCA on a recent morning. For some of the children, "Campaign for Kids" will assist with funding their care.

"Campaign for Kids helps subsidize the fees for youngsters who otherwise could not afford the services of the YMCA," said Joe Peele, executive director.

Tickets for the 12th annual Campaign for Kids fundraiser, to be held Friday at the Cavalier Beach Club, can be purchased at the door for \$70. Tickets for those 55 and older are \$55.

The creative black-tie party

will be themed "Treasure Island," and guests are encouraged to wear pirate-inspired garb. Peele will sport a tuxedo with a red sash and was considering letting his beard grow.

Last year's event raised \$17,000, with more than 200 people in attendance.

Peele, along with a planning committee, chose the theme and decorations, which will include treasure chest centerpieces and pirate party favors.

The evening's festivities will feature dinner — scallops, shrimp and roast beef — and an open bar. The band Butter will entertain. Silent auction tables will be open from 7 to 9 p.m. Vacation packages, themed gift baskets, restaurant gift certificates, bicycles and kayaks are among the items up for bidding.

"Campaign for Kids," the fundraiser, benefits high-risk children in the Oceanfront area who attend programs at the Hilltop Family YMCA.

"Because of this campaign, our children are able to attend before- (and) after-school programs and summer camp," said membership director Elizabeth Parris.

The Hilltop Family YMCA, at 1536 Laskin Road, was built in 1994. Some 125 children from eight local public elementary schools are in the after-school program.

Half of those enrolled are being subsidized in some way, Peele said.

The Hilltop location par-

WANT TO GO?

WHAT: Hilltop Family YMCA's annual fundraiser/silent auction "Campaign for Kids"

WHERE: Cavalier Beach Club, 42nd Street at the Oceanfront

WHEN: 7 to 11 p.m. Friday

COST: \$70; \$55 for adults 55 or older

MORE: INFO: Call 422-3805.

ticipates in the "Open Doors" program of the YMCA of South Hampton Roads, which follows a sliding fee scale designed to fit an individual's financial situation.

About a dozen boys and girls in the before-school program played, exercised and chatted while they ate lunch with counselor Stephanie Seals before a bus took them to their schools.

Zakary Floyd, 5, a kindergartner at Cooke Elementary School, said his favorite part of the morning was playing with puzzles.

"Our goal is to put Judeo-Christian principles into our programs," said Peele. "When the kids are here, we want to instill these values — caring, sportsmanship, self-esteem. We are not baby-sitters at the YMCA; we want to help them grow as people."

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