

Coins add up to make a big donation from Tiogue School for leukemia



Jessica Selby-Daily Times

Cheryl Canfield Ross's fourth grade class showed their spirit on Sports Day, part of the initiative to raise money for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Pennies for Patients program.

Leukemia and Lymphoma Society will benefit from the donations

JESSICA SELBY
jselby@ricentral.com

COVENTRY — It might have only been coins that the students brought in, but in the end, they collected nearly \$2,000 in donations for their cause.

Each year the students at Tiogue School participate in the annual Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Pennies for Patients program. The program runs annually in March and encourages schools across the state to collect whatever spare change they can find and bring it in for the fund raiser.

Cheryl Canfield Ross, a teacher at Tiogue School in Coventry took over as the coordinator of the fund raising campaign at her school "a few years ago." Under her guidance, the school holds the annual support campaign during the first two weeks in March.

She said that as tradition has it, the students make up small collection boxes and leave one in each classroom

in the school for the course of the two weeks. Each morning during that two week time span, members of the fourth grade classes make morning announcements to motivate students to participate. It is at that time that the students in each classroom contribute to their collection boxes if they can.

According to Ross, the students, faculty and staff at the school "have all been wonderful."

"We had some students that completely emptied their piggy banks to support our fund raiser," she said. "And even though this is basically a coin drive, we had many students who brought in bills and big bills at that."

Michael Furtado, one of the fourth grade students in Ross's class brought in a \$10 bill from his own piggy bank and said that his mother wanted to give too and handed over an additional \$20 from her.

Although he was the exception, Ross said, many other students and staff members made "extremely generous contributions as well."

Last year when the school organized the fund raiser, Ross said that they started out with a goal of raising

\$1,000. By the end of the two week time period, the school tallied just over \$2,000. This year, she said, she hoped that they would do just as well and was confident that they would meet that goal if not exceed it.

"Every day the collection boxes from each classroom were coming back full and in the first week we held a popcorn sale where we raised \$258 alone," Ross said. "In the second week we held a "Sports Day" in which students and faculty were invited to wear sporting attire of their choice to school for a donation."

Many did and came to school wearing their favorite sports team jersey, baseball cap or other type of uniform.

In the end, the school amassed a total of \$1,964.90. Canfield Ross said that because that much money in the form of bags of coins is so challenging to handle, a parent volunteered to take all of the coins and have them rolled so that a bank would take them in turn for a bank check which could be delivered to the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

The check was delivered earlier this month on behalf of the student body at Tiogue School.