

Toddler's death is reason for golf outing

By **KATRINA N. EWING**

Gahanna News Reporter

Meghan Joy Brochowski was only 15 months old when she died in 1994, but her family and friends continue to celebrate the "joy" she had during her short life and to help other disabled children along the way.

The 12th annual Golf for Joy memorial tournament is slated to begin at 12:30 p.m. Saturday at Foxfire Golf Club, 10799 state Route 104, Lockbourne.

The event is sponsored by the MJB Foundation. Meghan Joy's parents, Jim and Annette Brochowski of Galloway, started the foundation in her honor.

Meghan and her twin sister, Kailey, were born in 1993. Kailey was healthy, but Megan was diagnosed with cerebral palsy.

"The MJB Foundation is dedicated to supporting Central Ohio organizations that strive to bring joy to children with mental and physical challenges," said foundation volunteer Bruce Kromer, a Gahanna resident.

Golf for Joy is the foundation's primary fundraiser, Kromer said.

Past donation recipients include the Miracle League of Central Ohio and the Franklin County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities Early Childhood Education Center.

In May, a fountain donated by the foundation was installed and dedicated at the site of the MRDD Early Childhood Education Center, 2862 Johnstown Road, Gahanna. Landscaping to be completed at the fountain also will be paid for through the foundation.

Prior to her death, Meghan attended classes at the center with her mother and formed a strong bond with her teachers and support staff, Kromer said.

"When we created the MJB Foundation, the first (people) we wanted to help were those who had helped Meghan," Mr. Brochowski said.

When the foundation approached MRDD about a possible donation, they suggested the water feature, he said.

"(MRDD) was working on an outdoor learning center for children and their families. They had put (the fountain) in the design, but didn't have the budget for it," Mr. Brochowski said.

Students at the center enjoy the new fountain, said Debbie New, instructor at the center.

"The kids love it. They're always out there, putting their hands in it for different sensory experiences," New said.

A long-term goal of the foundation is to create a type of "scholarship" program for families who have trouble meeting the tremendous financial responsibility



The 12th annual Golf For Joy event is held in memory of Meghan Joy Brochowski, who was only 15 months old when she died in 1994. The golf outing is scheduled Saturday at Foxfire Golf Club.

that inevitably goes with having a mentally or physically challenged child, Mr. Brochowski said.

Organizing the annual golf outing and working with the foundation helps keep his family close as they remember Meghan together, he said.

"My youngest daughter, (Delaney, 10,) never knew Meghan. It really is nice to see her ask a lot of ques-

tions about her older sister," Mr. Brochowski said.

Meghan's middle name and her spirit continues to be the force behind the foundation, he said.

"We want to spread that 'joy' and inspire that fight and determination in other kids," Mr. Brochowski said.

For more information on Golf for Joy and the MJB Foundation visit mjbfoundation.org.