

T/E group shows that it cares about people that care

By Blair Eberhardt-Ladd

T&E Care, an organization that helps local families in need, invites the community to come out Saturday, Jan. 31 for free food and fun in the name of supporting a good cause. From 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. the Free Soup 'N Stuff event will be at The Kitchen Workshop, 21 Plank Ave. in Paoli. The Kitchen Workshop will provide the soup to go in the bread bowls to be provided by Panera Bread in the Gateway Shopping Center.

The purpose of the event is to thank Panera Bread for collecting money over the past year to be donated to T&E Care. "When Panera Bread opened in Gateway, they approached us as their organization of choice," said Sandi Gorman, co-founder of T&E Care. "We of course said yes to their wanting to raise money for our organization. Donations have been collected all year and Panera has generously given 25 cents for every dollar that was collected."

Every dollar counts for T&E Care because the organization helps families on an as need basis, at no cost to them. "We are not a government organization so we cannot help long-term, but we can help with emergencies and can try to get someone over a gap," said Gorman. "My husband and I started this organization in September of 2005 in response to Hurricane Katrina, but have since reorganized to help local families who are having some sort of a problem. We see if we can offer support, whether it is financially such as a month's rent, paying a utility bill or a month of car insurance, or possibly paying a month of child care, a semester's worth of college books, and of course helping with the cost of food. Sometimes we've helped with connections to certain legal or financial services or with human-resource people to help someone get a job."

At the Free Soup 'N Stuff event Saturday, Panera Bread representatives will be on hand

around noon to present a check to T&E Care. "We've been told that approximately \$2,500 was raised for our organization," said Gorman. "The event is free and all we ask is that you try and bring a few food items to donate to REACT." This local nonprofit organization, run by Mabel Purcell, donates food to people in need. Canned goods or boxed items such as pasta and cereal are suggested items to donate. All collected food will be donated to REACT after the event.

"We have found this community to be a wealth of people with big hearts," said Gorman. All of the organizations involved in the Free Soup 'N Stuff event go above and beyond for local families in need. "Art Roman, the head of The Kitchen Workshop, has donated many dinners to families throughout the holiday season, as well as lots of the food to be provided at this event," said Gorman.

For more information on T & E Care or to RSVP to the Free Soup 'N Stuff event visit www.tecare.org.