

Spring fest showcases CYSS activities

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The magical world of Dr. Seuss greeted the youth of Baumholder during the annual Youth and Schools Services

spring festival April 24 at the Rheinlander Community Center. More than 1,000 community members turned out for the annual event that offered prizes, arts and crafts, music, dancing, snacks and of course, a good time for all.



Photo by Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava

Army Community Service employees provide several arts and crafts activities for children at the spring festival.



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A child tries to put green eggs on a platter next to the "ham" during the spring festival April 24.

"The spring fest is an annual event that we hold during the month of the military child on the last Saturday in April. That's when we offer activities for the children such as arts and crafts and more," said Emma Donaldson, CYSS deployment specialist.

Dr. Seuss's Magical adventures was the perfect theme to draw the children into the fantastic world where the Cat in the Hat reigns supreme and "Green Eggs and Ham" are served up for breakfast. It also exposed parents to what CYSS has to offer and to actually see some of the programs in action like ballet, dance and TaiKwonDo.

"This year I wanted to do something different by bringing in the children in our community to let the community itself know what is available through the skies instructional program, such as dance, ballet, kinder music TaiKwonDo, tutoring and so on. So this year I wanted to bring that into the fest just to let the parents know what's going on and they are loving it because, to be true about it, some parents didn't even know we were offering ballet and dance. When they saw it today they were excited about it and the wanted to go register with CYSS to get their child enrolled," said Donaldson.

After the CYSS dance and ballet classes demonstrated and impressed the crowd with their elegance and agility, the CYSS TaiKwonDo students changed the pace a little by displaying their defensive punching, kicking and tumbling abilities.

For the past two years, CYSS has enlisted the puppeteer talents of the Polizei from Trier. "What they do is present a puppet show on safety for the children." Their presentation focuses on what to do to be safe while walking outside such as stopping at crosswalks and looking both ways before going across the street and so on.

For some festival goers, watching volunteers assemble a hat for them was just as enjoyable as all the dancing or tumbling going on around them. Still others preferred to cruise the Rheinlander with their hair in the wind.

Outside the Rheinlander, the weather was perfect for a romp in the bouncing castles, or for some karaoke and fancy dancing.

I'm excited myself today. I've been here ten years. This is my tenth fest and I'm just having a good time and I want to leave this today knowing that I've made a difference with the children here on Baumholder.

Donaldson will soon depart Baumholder and reflected on the spring fest as well as her years here in Baumholder. In a letter to CYSS employees Donaldson said:

"Reflecting on this past weekend (weekend of the fest) I would be amiss to not give my sincere thanks and words of appreciation for your participation in the annual CYSS Spring Fest 2010. Please accept my grateful thanks for the key role each of you and your team played in making CYSS look good to the Baumholder community, all the while bringing happiness to the eyes of the children. We are about children business not one day but every day of their lives.

To the volunteers who helped put this year's fest together Donaldson said:

"Your tireless efforts behind the scenes did not go unnoticed and I want to thank you for your personal commitment to excellence in your work. Not only did you deliver on the basics of your commitment, you went the extra mile and served our annual spring fest as though you were one of our own staff at CYSS.

"For that I am most grateful and want you to know how much I appreciated such," said Donaldson.



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An assistant at the spring festival helps children with their creativity by using pipe cleaners, feathers and cotton balls.