

LHS girls basketball, Louisburg Tonics team up to raise money for charity



While it's not the area college team barnstormers tour visiting Louisburg High School, a little early season action will pit the LHS girls' basketball team against the Tonics, Louisburg's Granny Basketball League team, as they team up to raise money and donations for the local food pantry.

The two teams are planning a little mix-up all in the name of good fun and a chance to benefit the Agape Food Pantry. The event will begin at 3 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 6 at the Louisburg High School gym. Admission to the event will be an item for the pantry, either a non-perishable food item or personal hygiene item, including diapers and baby wipes.

Chris Cakes will be on hand serving pancakes from 4-5 p.m. in the mezzanine of the gym so fans can grab an early supper and catch the action on the court. The pancake meal will be \$5 per person with children 5 and under eating free. The meal includes all-you-can-eat pancakes and sausage, coffee or juice. The local Ministerial Alliance, a collaboration of local churches who assist people with utility bills and provide some community religious services, have graciously donated \$500 to help cover the hard costs of the pancake feed.

The Lady Wildcats will be selling tickets for raffle baskets as a team fundraiser as well as having a bake sale and selling

water. They will also sponsor half-court and granny free-throw shots during halftime for a \$1 donation per shot.



Three members of the Louisburg Tonics (from left) are Ellen Morland, Jean Carder and Janet York.

The LHS Jazzy Cats are also involved and will perform at halftime of the game. They will conduct a 50/50 raffle throughout the afternoon. They will also have donation boxes to collect new or gently worn shoes as part of a shoe drive they are sponsoring this fall. Collected shoes are sent to Africa where they provide inventory for micro-entrepreneurs who sell the shoes to support themselves and their families.

The local food pantry, housed at the United Methodist Church, 249 N. Metcalf, has been a staple in Louisburg for more than 30 years. Distributions are the third Wednesday of each month. Persons who might need assistance or would like to provide a donation, may contact the pantry by phone or text at

913-724-5311. Kitty Guetterman is the president, Janie Prettyman is the vice president, Melanie Bigley serves as secretary while Joe Gregar is the treasurer.

The pantry serves about 50 families a month, Guetterman says. She said recent higher grocery prices coming off the COVID pandemic has made things difficult for the pantry. During COVID, churches and the library, groups that routinely collected items for the food pantry, were closed and donations dropped off. Now that churches and the library are open and collecting for the pantry again, food prices have gone up.

Guetterman said the pantry purchases items from Harvesters and are charged by the pound. They also purchase groceries from the Paola Price Chopper, in which they receive a discount, that allows the pantry to offer a larger variety of food.

The charity game will feature the Tonics players against members of the girls' high school team as well as local celebrities.

"I hope the community comes out to support our food pantry as well as the girls' basketball team and dance team and encourages our celebrity players," Jean Carder, captain of the Tonics, said. "It should be a fun afternoon with Jarrod Worthington serving as announcer, and we'll be done well before the Chiefs game that night. The Tonics just wanted to bring attention to the pantry and the increasing price of food that not only affects your pocketbook and mine but also impacts the pantry's budget."

"The girls basketball team is looking forward to our benefit with the Louisburg Tonics. This benefit is for a great cause and we are very excited to help out the food pantry," Adrienne Lane, head coach of the LHS girls team, said. "The girls on the basketball team are involved in many different activities at LHS and many of these activities allow the girls to be involved with the community."

The partnership between the granny team and the high school team is a new one but the grannies are looking to recruit these players in another 30-plus years, Carder said. The team plans to support the girls throughout the season.

“I am really looking forward to the upcoming basketball season. Our team is returning eight varsity letter winners from last year, and I think our team has the chance to be strong and competitive,” Lane said.

Granny Basketball is a gentle game for women of a certain age. Women must be 50 or older to play. The game’s rules generally follow 1920s high school girls’ rules with some modifications for player safety. The Tonics have been a fixture in Louisburg since 2016. There are more than 400 Granny basketball players playing on 40 teams in 10 states.