

?Henryville Clubs, PTO working together to bring national speaker to local area

Written by Janna Ross

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? Ever attend a high school basketball game on a cold winter evening and think you would love to have something hot and delicious to warm you up and not have enough time to make dinner before heading to cheer on the team.

The Henryville PTO along with the Henryville High School SADD and Key Clubs are making that dilemma a little easier to answer.

The groups are sponsoring a chili supper on Friday evening, December 19 when the Hornets face Lanesville. The chili supper will be held from 5:30 to 7 p.m.

A spaghetti dinner will be held on Friday evening, January 16 when the Hornets host the Mustangs of New Washington. The spaghetti dinner will also be held from 5:30 to 7 p.m. The cost of the dinners will be a donation. (The junior varsity games will begin at 6 p.m. with the varsity contests beginning at approximately 7:30 p.m.)

The dinners will be fundraisers to bring national speaker Dale "Mad Dog" Messmer and his "S.T.O.P.-Straight Talk Outreach Program" to the local area. Messmer is scheduled to visit local schools in April to bring his message about drugs, alcohol and gangs to the students prior to their proms.

"We want everyone to come out and enjoy some good home-cooked food and enjoy a great basketball game," stated Henryville School Resource Officer and Clark County Sheriff's Deputy Joe Waters.

Waters is working with other local School Resource Officers and school officials to bring Messmer to several schools during his visit.

"We are working together to get him here. I am working to get him to visit Henryville, Borden, New Washington and Silver Creek during his visit," Waters stated.

Waters first met Messmer during a School Resource Officer conference.

"I met him at the first conference I attended in Orlando. I was able to talk to him and thought then that bringing him here would be cool," Waters explained.

The next conference Waters attended he learned more about Messmer from other officers who had brought the speaker to their schools.

"The next conference I talked to some of the officers to see what they thought about Messmer. They all said he was great and many are working on fundraising projects in order to bring him back to their schools again. I received nothing but good feedback from the officers who have seen his program."

Once Waters returned from the conference he began to work on the idea of bring Messmer to the local area.

"We know he is coming but the dates have not been finalized at this point," Waters said.

Messmer likes to spend the entire day at the school. According to Waters, Messmer's morning program is a 90-minute program. Then he likes to break for lunch.

"He will go into the cafeteria and talk to the students. He really likes to interact with the students," Water explained.

The afternoon program is an additional workshop broke into small groups.

The plan is to have Messmer visit one school each day he is in the local area.

"I am really looking forward to bringing this program here. I think he will make an impact on the local students. He doesn't candy coat anything, he is just really straight forward," Waters added.

Messmer's program is all about choices. The choices that one makes and how they affect not only the individual but every person around them.

Messmer spent 10 years in the United States Marine Corps from 1965 to 1975 before

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working with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department in California. He can actually discuss choices by first hand experience. A bad choice made by Messmer changed his life forever.

He was convicted of smuggling cocaine into the United States and spent 10 years, 8 months and 11 days in prison.

"I made one stupid choice and it changed my life forever," Messmer stated in an informational DVD.

Mad Dog, as Messmer is affectionately known, definitely is straight forward in the S.T.O.P. program but hopes he makes the students just think about the choices they are making and are going to make.

"Some of the things I have to say here today might scare you. It's not my purpose nor my intent to scare you. I'm not going to waste my breath or your time trying to scare anybody. Some of the things I have to say today might offend you," Messmer stated. "And I really don't care," he continued with a smile and a laugh on the informational DVD.

If you would like to make a donation to help bring Messmer to the local area please contact Joe Waters at 502-489-4272 or e-mail him at jwaters@clarkco.sheriff.com.