

Dads, daughters connect for a cause
National Charity League spruces up Tobacco Trail

BY RACHEL A. WITHERS, CORRESPONDENT

Most teenage girls would prefer a lazy Saturday morning followed by a trip to the mall, but for members of the National Charity League, helping others while spending quality time with their moms just makes more sense.

Dads have an occasional opportunity for some bonding time, too.

On Oct. 13 the league's Cardinal Chapter, which includes residents of Cary and Raleigh, held its third annual father-daughter event at the American Tobacco Trail. The group arrived at the Pittard Sears Road access in Chatham County to help clear the trail, moving brush and logs off the trail and into the woods.

The crisp, cool morning set the perfect scene for the task ahead. The league met along the gravel road that separates the access points of the trail and was greeted by two pink covered tables, plenty of water and trail mix for the busy workers.

Bill Bussey of the Triangle Rails to Trails Conservancy led the group to the four-mile section of the 22-mile trail that needed attention. Bussey

gave the league a few guidelines including, "Be safe, have fun and wear gloves," before sending the group into the woods.

"The goal is to make the trail safe for users," Bussey said.

Equipped with their instructions, the nearly 100 participants headed to the wooded trail. "This is a new experience; I have heard of [the ATT] but I never knew where it was," said Tony Lampuri, father of Amanda Lampuri, a member of NCL for three years. "It's nice and natural," Lampuri said.

Mark Everett and his daughter Elise also enjoyed their time together while helping others. "It's nice outside, doing simple chores and being with my daughter," said Everett as he put his arm around Elise.

Farther down the trail, a group of girls posed with a large branch while their dads took turns taking their pictures. The girls' chit-chat and laughter turned a mundane chore into a good time with family and friends.

"Seems like a better thing to do than just hanging out with friends," Michelle Borges said.

"We help out and hang out with friends," added Brielle Mantin.

Founded in 1947, the NCL includes mothers and daughters working together or within their age group in philanthropic and educational activities. The league has 139 chapters in 15 states nationwide with three chapters in North Carolina. About 90 families belong to the Cardinal Chapter, which holds approximately 50 to 60 philanthropic events each year, said Debbie May, the Cardinal Chapter president.

The father-daughter event is a grade-level event hosted by the eighth-grade members. The eighth-graders organized the event, prepared trail mix and also encouraged each member to bring supplies for the 2nd Chance Pet Adoption cat center, said Betty Jo Johnson.

"I like helping and meeting people," said Brie Golden, a NCL member.

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