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Board sets plan for ball

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After deciding in early April to set up a new charity event in the form of a Commissioners' Ball, Preble County officials are currently setting up the details of the event. The commissioners originally had the event scheduled for Saturday, July 23, but moved it to Saturday, Oct. 22.

After having the idea in the back of his mind for some time, Preble County Commission President David Wesler, pleased with the current state of the commissioners' office, was finally prepared to introduce the new charity event to benefit the some of the county's agencies. Wesler brought up the idea to fellow commissioners Chris Day and Bob Stonecash at an April 4 regular meeting.

"I thought years ago that I would like the commissioners to have a charity ball," he said. "I guess I didn't bring it up a few years ago because the climate just wasn't right in here, but it has been now."

Some details have still yet to be ironed out, but the date is set. Proceeds from the event will be used entirely to benefit organizations in Preble County. The idea was given to Wesler from another county commissioner, who has had success with the event.

"I heard of this years ago from a commissioner in another county, and they've had one yearly for almost 12 years," Wesler said. "The commissioners split the profits among them, and they say, 'Give to the charity you want.' I think this would be good for Preble County. Hopefully, this is something that could go on year after year after year."

At the Wednesday, July 20 meeting of the commission, Wesler, Bob Stonecash, and Chris Day designated organizations to donate the proceeds to. Stonecash's choice is the Preble County Robotics Team; Day chose Triangle Therapy, and Wesler chose the ASK Playground and YES fund.

The ball will be held at the Hueston Woods Lodge, due to the space necessary for the amount of people Wesler is anticipating will attend. About 200 people is his expectation, and he said Hueston Woods' room will hold that many people and still house a dance floor and band.

Funding for the event will go through Preble County Developmental Partnership to keep it out of the commission office.

"All the monies will be streamlined through them," Wesler said. "And all bills will be paid by them. The extra money that is left over after we solicit the businesses will be split three ways."

The charities can change from year to year, according to Wesler.

"Even though there is a lot that could be considered, it's not the same three or how ever many will get it next year," he said. "This is a selection we can make each year. There's many that are deserving of it."

"There are no Preble County tax dollars involved here. It's strictly on the three of us," Stonecash said. "It's something we're doing to try and help programs in Preble County."

Wesler noted Medina County, which this event is modeled after, solicits funding from area businesses.

"They said they raise most of their dollars from sponsorships," Wesler said. "They have a nice meal and a band, and they try to get all of their elected officials to attend. They get sponsorships up to 'x' amount of dollars, and they advertise in the newspaper who gave, and honor them at the event."

"Let's go for it," Stonecash said.

With Oct. 22 set as the date, now all that's left is the details.

"I anticipate we will have a small committee to start working on the details of the ball very soon," Wesler wrote in an e-mail. "We will also be working on visiting and soliciting donations from businesses around the county and state."

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