

Fain named Father of the Year

PAPA, CTC, PARD
hold annual
Father's Day fest

By DENNIS J. WRIGHT

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PHOENIXVILLE — Phoenixville Area Positive Alternatives (PAPA), Phoenixville Communities That Care (CTC) and Phoenixville Area Recreation Department (PARD) honored local fathers during the 11th Annual Father's Day Community Celebration at Reservoir Park Sunday afternoon.

The 2008 Father of the Year was also named at the event, which officially kicked off the start of the Phoenixville Area Positive Alternatives-Phoenixville Area Recreation Department (PAPA/PARD) Summer Basketball League.

Denise Williams, event chairperson, invited all of the PAPA board members, along with every father at the park, to join her at center of the basketball court.

She asked everyone to give all of the fathers a round of applause, and then announced the winner of the 2008 Father of the Year — Sam Fain of Ridge Road, Phoenixville.

His nine-year-old son, Michael Fain, wrote the winning essay about his father.

He wrote, "I want my dad to be the Father of the Year because he is nice, great and fun. I am glad he is my dad. He is a great dad because he plays games with me like catch. He is special, kind, cool and fantastic. I ask him if I can watch TV and he says yes if it's appropriate. He helps me make good choices. He treats me how I want to be treated. My parents adopted me when I was four. They take good care of me. I am lucky to have a dad that treats me and my sisters with respect. My dad is awesome because he loves my mom. My dad works a lot to take

care of our family. We have six kids and I am the only boy. It is nice to have my dad as another boy in the house. I want my dad to win Father of the Year and a million dollars would be nice, then he can be home more with me. I hope you will call me and tell me my dad won. Thank you."

A management trainee, Fain said he was very surprised to find out that he won.

"I knew Mike wrote an essay because I was picked as Father of the Month for April," said Fain. "It's tough juggling six kids. I've been working two jobs prior to this new job. My wife Karen is a stay-at-home mom, which is a huge help."

Fain said that Mike, along with his sisters Anna, 16, Mary Kate, 15, Julie, 13, Elizabeth, 9, and Lauren, 4, are all really good kids.

"The family loves to swim at the YMCA, so they are always

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there," he said. "They are also into different sports. We try to have meals together and do things as a family while we are all together."

Williams presented Fain with a huge plaque, along with movie tickets and gift cards to Giant Food Stores and Cracker Barrel.

She also made a surprise announcement that Christina Hamilton, PAPA executive director, will be leaving PAPA to pursue a coaching career.

"I want to thank you all for embracing me," said Hamilton. "Thank you to the Phoenixville community. I'll be around to see some of these games. Best wishes to you all."

Along the grounds of Reservoir Park, moon-bounce rides were set up all over the park for kids of all ages, while attendees had their choice of various refreshments like fried fish, chicken wings, pasta, and salad.

Vendors such as Petrucci's Ice Cream & Water Ice, Dutch Ped-

ler Funnel Cake, Buca DiBepo, and Rahim's Catering were available to feed the needs of hungry attendees.

Serving up fried fish and chicken wings was Rahim Beasley of Rahim's Catering, Phoenixville.

"I started doing this around four years ago," said Beasley. "Kenny (Winston) told me to come out and make some fish sandwiches because no one else had them here. My first year, I went through 80 pounds of fish. So far this year, I'm working on 40 pounds."

While most chefs won't give up their secret seasonings, Beasley said the breeding for his fish sandwiches is trial and error.

"The breeding is a special mix," he said, while covering another batch of fish for frying. "I don't measure, so I just keep doing it until it tastes good."

For dessert there were funnel cakes along with water ice from Petrucci's Ice Cream & Water Ice, making the store's yearly appearance at the community event.

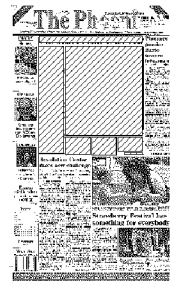
"We've sold a nice combination of water ice and smoothies all day," said owner John Colarusso. "The weather was definitely hot enough to make it a good time for frozen treats."

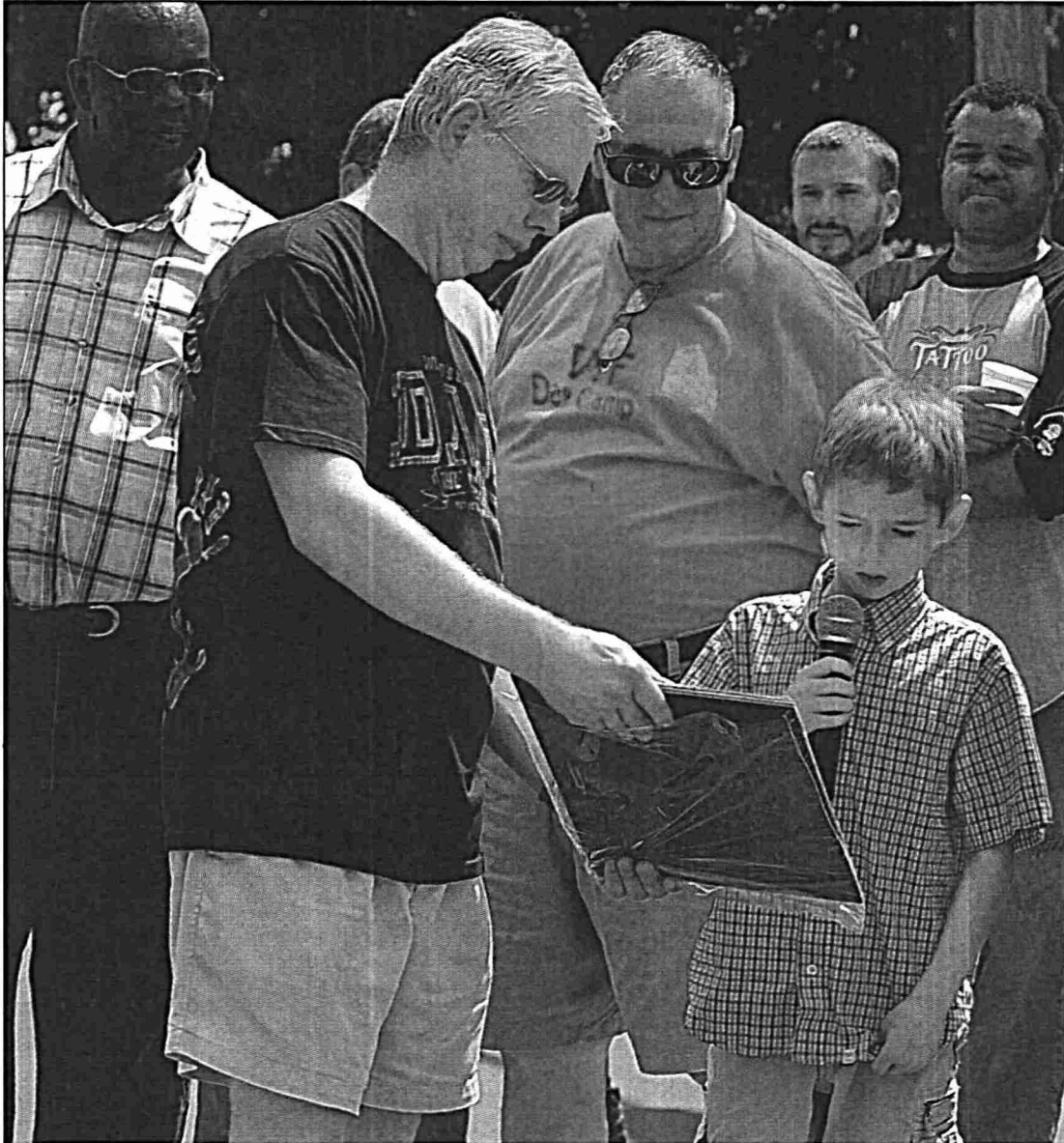
Rich Sachs, camp director, Valley Forge Baptist Church, had a table set up to remind residents about their summer camp program.

"Denise invited us here to represent a new day camp," said Sachs. "The day camp runs Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and it starts (Monday, June 16). There are two field trips per week and plenty of fun things to do."

Williams said that the event was a total success.

"This is our 11th year and we had a lot of companies donate to us," she said. "We had four food vendors and five other vendors. It's been an awesome celebra-





Staff photo by Barry Taglieber

Sam Fain of Phoenixville holds a plaque for his son, Mike, to read during the 11th Annual Father's Day Community Celebration at Reservoir Park on Sunday.