

Jackson Classic swings clubs for kids

Proceeds go to a foundation dedicated o fighting pediatric brain tumors

By Matt Cunningham Staff Writer

The Jeffrey Thomas Hayden Foundation's Robert Jackson Golf Classic is scheduled to return Monday to Beckett Ridge Golf and Country Club for its third year. Event planners hope the classic, which will feature appearances by former sports stars such as three time Pro Bowl safety David Fulcher, former sports radio host Tom Gamble and former UC basketball star and Olympian George Wilson, is expected to raise up to \$45,000 for the foundation, which fights pediatric brain tumors through information, networking and research funding.

West Chester Twp. residents Tim and Cindy Hayden started the foundation in 2004 after their 12-year-old son, Jeffrey, died from a brainstem glioma, a malignant form of tumor. Tim Hayden said the family faced a number of tough decisions with little guidance.

"For kids that get this terrible diagnosis," Tim Hayden said, "the doctors look at the parents and say, 'What do you want to do?'"

In cases where chances of survival hover near 1 in 99, is it better to attack an almost incurable tumor with aggressive therapies or is it better to make the most of what time the family has left? Tim Hayden said the choices were hard and frustrating as they fought a losing battle. The family wanted to do something for others facing the same situation.

"We don't have a cure, but we can help them make a decision," he said.

The foundation works to further research into pediatric brain tumors through a \$250,000 fellowship at Ohio State University. But much of its work involves connecting affected families with resources and information through the foundation's Web site, jthf.org.

"Our goal is to provide facts and information," said Hayden, who emphasized that the foundation does not provide recommendations.

"What we try to do is say, 'Here's what other people are doing,'" he said.

To keep these projects funded, the foundation relies on a series of fundraisers, such as a November dinner and auction and the golf classic. And to keep the events running, the foundation relies on volunteers.

"I can count on a solid group of twenty women and men who come out to every golf outing," said volunteer coordinator Joan Baldasare. Many of the volunteers for the golf outing come back every year to help out.

“I think everyone walks away feeling like they helped and they accomplished something,” she said. “I think that’s what keeps bringing them back. It’s a good feeling.”

The Robert Jackson Golf Classic takes place Monday at Beckett Ridge Country Club. Day-of registration begins at 7:30 a.m., with golf starting at 8:30 a.m. Cost is \$135 per person or \$500 per foursome. For more information, call (513) 645-8603 or go to jthf.org.

Contact this reporter at (513) 755-5127 or mcunningham@coxohio.com.

Source: <http://www.pulsejournal.com/search/content/oh/story/news/local/2007/09/26/pjw092707golf.html>