

Wreath sales will boost Emmons Scholarship Fund

Staff Report

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New leaders have been appointed and a fundraising campaign is under way for The Taylor Emmons Scholarship Fund.

The nonprofit was created after Emmons died in a traffic crash at age 19 on Dec. 5 last year.

As a student at The Out-of-Door Academy, he was co-captain of the baseball team, captain of the boys' golf team, vice president of his senior class, Homecoming King and voted student with the most school spirit. He also volunteered for All Faiths Food Bank, helping fill backpacks with basic necessities for children in Manatee and Sarasota counties.

The fund strives to carry on his spirit by helping feed the hungry in the community and funding scholarships for deserving, financially challenged students who could not otherwise attend The Out-of-Door Academy.

"As we approach the one-year anniversary of Taylor's passing, we honor his memory by giving students from various social and economic backgrounds the opportunity to experience the benefits of an independent, college preparatory education at The Out-of-Door Academy," Michael Emmons, Taylor's father, said in a prepared statement.

The goal is to raise \$1 million to perpetuate the scholarship fund.

Sandra Albano was recently appointed as the fund's executive director. Keith Reeves, CPA, is the chief financial officer.

Albano's management experience includes client services, community outreach, development, marketing, media relations and sales. She previously co-owned a Merle Norman Cosmetic franchise studio and worked as a property manager.

Reeves is president and owner of Crescent Capital Advisors, a capital advisory and consulting service to private and public companies, family trusts and individuals.

In a partnership with All Faiths Food Bank, the fund is selling fresh, handmade holiday wreaths. Proceeds from wreath sales will benefit both nonprofit organizations.

Using Balsam fir branches cut from Taylor's Trees, a family-owned farm in Maine, the 22-inch, double-sided, handmade wreaths are adorned with red berries, pine cones and a choice of a red or burgundy bow.

Wreaths are available online at www.Temmons.org and at these locations in Manatee and Sarasota counties: the Music on Main event tonight on Main Street in Lakewood Ranch, Lakewood Ranch Town Hall, Lucky Pelican Bistro, Benderson Development on Cooper Creek Boulevard in University Park, Evie's Tavern on Bee Ridge Road, Phillippi Estate Park, Sarasota Farmers Market, Simon's Coffee House and at Stickney Point Road and Tamiami Trail.

For more information, call 915-9249.