

Lusby prevails over La Plata in Legion

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Girl finds fun way to raise money for troops

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■ Funds
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Girl hula-hoops for the troops

■ Money raised will go to July 4th pizzas

By LAURA BUCK
Staff writer

Christa Clark had to take a hula-hoop break halfway through an interview. But then again, it was due to the hula-hoop she received on Easter this year that she got the interview in the first place.

"It started when she was standing in the living room and wouldn't put the hula-hoop down," said Darcey Clark of Owings, Christa's mom.

Darcey Clark said her 9-year-old daughter said that she wished she could somehow get paid for her latest obsession, which is when the idea popped into her mind of Christa hula-hooping for a charity.

"Christa always looks for ways to give to others; it's pretty amazing," said her father Joseph "Mike" Clark, who, as a retired member of the U.S. Air Force, was especially proud when Christa chose to hula-hoop for the troops.

"I just said [pick a] charity and my mom listed a bunch and I think it was me who said the troops," said Christa, a rising fourth grader at Sunderland Elementary School, who decided that collecting money by setting up a "hula-hoop stand" in her neighborhood would be the perfect way to enjoy her favorite activity and give back.

She ultimately decided to donate to Pizza 4 Patriots, an organization partnered with the shipping company DHL and Uno Chicago Grill to deliver pizzas to troops throughout the Middle East on the Fourth of July.

"I felt bad for them because they didn't have regular food like we do. They don't have pizza and sandwiches," Christa said of the troops, who she has always been aware of as part of a family with several military members.

"We try to instill in them that with your perfect little life here, not everybody has that," said Darcey Clark. "... The life of the troops over there, for most people it's not anything they can comprehend."

Christa was able to raise about \$100 for Pizza 4 Patriots as the solo hula-hooper with her family serving as a cheering section. This was not her first fundraising initiative as she has held lemonade stands in the past. She said she is hoping to hula-hoop for another charity some time in the near future.

"I'd be surprised if she didn't," Darcey Clark said.

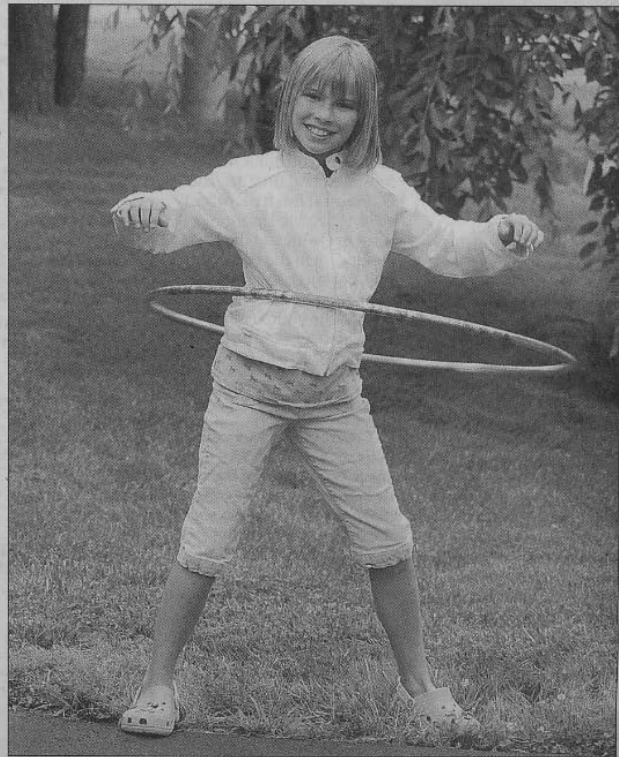
"I was very proud of her. It made me smile, her taking care of the troops; it's a beautiful thing," her father said, adding "... There is so much more support for the troops nowadays than there was when I was younger. It's kind of cool."

Christa also admitted that she is pretty proud of her accomplishment, saying, "That'll probably pay for like 20 personalized pizzas."

And she still hasn't tired from hula-hooping and is trying to break her record of seven minutes and 20 seconds.

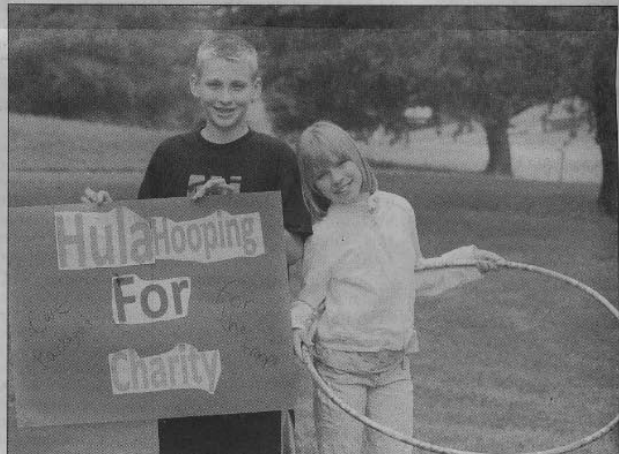
"I could have gone longer," she said.

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Submitted photos

Christa Clark, 9, of Owings has been hula-hooping in her neighborhood to raise money for Pizza 4 Patriots in order to provide Fourth of July pizzas to troops abroad.



Christa Clark's family, including her brother Joshua, has been her cheering section while she has raised money for troops serving overseas.