

Hopewell Valley News

HOPEWELL VALLEY: Turf field fund nears \$1M goal

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By John Tredrea, Special Writer

Saturday's Valley-wide fundraiser, centered at the Pennington Quality Market on Route 31, raised over \$15,000 toward the construction of a multi-purpose turf field at Hopewell Valley Central High School.

Leading the effort to build the new field is the Hopewell Valley Recreation Foundation, which worked with the market (PQM) and other area businesses to organize and run the fundraiser.

"We raised \$15,025 Saturday. Some more money may still be coming in," said Mike Rothwell, whose family has owned PQM since 1981. The Rothwells bought the market from the McVeigh brothers — Joe, John and Ed — who moved the store in 1960 from 12 N. Main St. in Pennington — where it had been since 1930 — to its current location.

More than \$10,000 was raised by PQM itself, which donated 5 percent of its Saturday receipts toward the field, which the Recreation Foundation hopes to see ready for use when school reopens in September.

Another \$3,500 was raised by a raffle held at PQM.

Over \$1,000 more was raised by local businesses that either made a donation or gave a portion of Saturday's receipts. Those businesses are Pennington Bagel, Fancy Threads, Chez Alice, Deli on a Bagel, Rosana's Boutique, The Front Porch, Uncle Ed's Creamery, Al's Sunoco and Emily's Cafe.

"Our day at the market was an unqualified success from the band's first note until the final raffle sale. We cannot sufficiently thank the Rothwell Family and our Pennington Market family, not only for their generosity, but also for their fun-loving spirit and flexibility with our first-time ever Hopewell Valley Central High School baggers," said Sheryl Stone, Recreation Foundation trustee.

"Our team is bigger than ever and we invite the entire community to join in the final fundraising push for this special project," Ms. Stone said.

AS OF WEDNESDAY, the foundation had raised over \$800,000 toward its \$1M goal. That leaves about \$200,000 to go.

"If everyone gave just a little — skip a lunch or dinner out — and made a contribution to the Hopewell Valley Recreation Foundation, together we could make this happen," said Chris Murphy, of Pennington's The Front Porch.

For more information or to make a donation go to hvrecoundation.org.

"We were very pleased with the support we got from the school district," Mr. Rothwell said. "Superintendent Tom Smith and Central High School Principal Mike Daher were with us Saturday.

"The high school band performed and coaches and members of athletic teams at the high school helped out a great deal. Our thanks go everyone who made donations and supported the effort for the field," Mr. Rothwell added.

"The continued support of the Recreation Foundation of Hopewell Valley is helping us realize our dream of building a multi-purpose turf field at Central High School," said Dr. Smith.

"We are grateful for the community support of this project. Their support was evidenced on Saturday when the Pennington Market and the seven local businesses donated a portion of their proceeds toward the project. These businesses have been tireless supporters of the district and we appreciate their efforts. We truly couldn't do it without them.

"The support of this project by the community means a lot to us and we are committed to our work with the recreation foundation so that we may build a field that the community can be proud of," the superintendent said.

"The event was so much fun. If a fundraiser can generate this much community spirit and support, then I can't wait to see the enthusiasm that the actual turf field will bring," said Lisa Wolff, school board president.

School and recreational league officials say a turf field will go a long way toward easing the Valley's crunch for athletic fields, because it can be used much more often than grass fields.

In addition, those officials have said, the long-term maintenance costs of a turf field are significantly lower than those of a grass field.

— *Ruth Luse, managing editor, contributed to this account.*