Blue Suede benefit fights child abuse

By Davie Moore
Staff Writer

Union University’s Chi Omegas assisted the Carl Perkins/Exchange Club Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse with their seventh annual Blue Suede Dinner and Auction on Feb. 24 at the Carl Perkins Center.

Half of the money raised will go to help build a new Child Advocacy Center, which will try to create a child-friendly atmosphere for abused children. The other half will maintain operation of the center.

The new Child Advocacy Center will be built on the grounds of the old Union University campus in East Jackson. “God has blessed us with a very new and different campus, but I am glad that He is using our old campus in a way that will reach out into the community and touch lives,” said junior social work major Tammy Meyers.

Last year’s event raised around $111,000, but this year’s event was an even bigger success bringing in $130,036 for the prevention of child abuse.

The featured entertainment for the evening was the Dempseys, a 1950’s style rockabilly trio from Memphis. “I got to hear the Dempseys last year and they are a lot of fun to watch. They’re really energetic,” said freshman Laura Lee Moore, who had a chance to see the Dempseys perform live on Beale Street during last year’s Elvis vigil.

The evening included a live auction in which local businesses donated many items including children’s bedroom furniture, a big-screen TV and a trip for two to the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am golf tournament.

There was also a silent auction which included tickets to “The Phantom of the Opera” and rounds of golf at local golf courses around the Jackson area. Chi Omega sent 20 members to assist in making sure that the evening ran smoothly. The Chi Omegas help the center with many of its activities and fundraisers on a regular basis.

“We just wanted a place where we could have an impact of service, and they definitely had a need for volunteers in the Jackson community. This is an opportunity to serve outside of the Union community and reach out,” said junior Tammi Gauldin who is a member of the Chi Omega’s Cardinal Cabinet for community service.

The Carl Perkins/Exchange Club Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse was founded in 1981. It assists families by taking referrals from human services and going into homes where abuse has occurred.

One of its goals is to work with parents individually in the home to teach and develop good parenting skills.

The center also provides group classes to the community, for anyone interested in learning better parenting skills, whether or not abuse has already taken place.

Their hope is that through better education and training, the abuse of children might be stopped before it has ever begun.

... Tennis

“We are bringing in students from Zimbabwe so that the students can be enlightened about the customs and foods of the country, and be exposed to reading of different cultures,” said Thompson. Because of limited packing space when coming to America, Nkomazana was not able to bring articles to show the students, “I would bring some stuff from Africa. Some of the things I’d show from Africa, they haven’t seen; they may never get to see in their lives.”

“Nkomazana says. “As we go our separate ways, and I look enviously once more at her shoes, just as unique as her parting words of, “Cheers, hey?”