

Home building on a smaller scale

2004

Deluxe playhouses part of annual fund-raiser

The Daily Inter Lake

Several local builders are scaling back their operations — making pint-size playhouses.

Local construction companies and real-estate agents are teaming up to build and sponsor five playhouses that will be raffled off as a fund-raiser to benefit the Nurturing Center in Kalispell.

An additional playhouse will be up for bid during a silent auction.

The playhouses, which will be displayed at the Kalispell Center Mall starting today, are crafted in a variety of styles, such as a castle theme and a cedar bungalow.

Swank Enterprises is sponsoring a playhouse with an Asian theme.

"It's going to look really fancy. It's pretty cool," said its builder, Dale Dey,

superintendent for Swank.

Crafting a playhouse can be difficult because the scale is so small, Dey said.

"Building it's a little bit of a challenge, but I enjoyed that," he said.

The playhouses are handcrafted and well made, said Tim Rogge, owner of Rogge Construction.

"Their construction is basically as good as you'd get if someone came to you and built you a house," he said.

Rogge's business is contributing a barn-style playhouse.

Some of the playhouses, including the house built by the mall staff, will be wired for electricity. At least one of the homes will be decorated by a local interior design firm.

Proceeds from the fund-raiser go to the Nurturing Center's Gemini Program, which pairs ninth-grade girls with women mentors.

This is the eighth year for the playhouse raffle. Last year the event raised \$8,000.

The center is hoping the raffle will bring in \$20,000 this year, said Susan

Christofferson, executive director.

The playhouses will be on display at the mall through May 8, the day of the raffle.

The drawing for the five playhouses takes place at 3 p.m. at the mall and the silent auction for the sixth playhouse closes at 4 p.m. that day.

Bidders and ticket-buyers need not be present to win.

Tickets are \$2 each or \$10 for six. Tickets are on sale at the Melon Basket during regular mall hours. People wanting to bid in the auction can sign up at the Melon Basket.

The Nurturing Center also will have volunteers staffing a ticket sales table in the mall this weekend.

On April 10, the mall also will sponsor the EGGstravaganza Easter Carnival, beginning at noon.

The carnival includes games, pinatas, entertainment and prizes for children.

Photos with the Easter Bunny will be available at the Easter Hut in the mall April 3, 4, 8 and 9 from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. and on April 10 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m.



Robin Loznak/Daily Inter Lake

KALISPELL CENTER Mall security and maintenance worker Walt Chapel works on a playhouse in the mall recently. The playhouse in one of several being raffled and auctioned off as a fund-raiser for the Nurturing Center.