



Photos by Cindy O. Herman/For The Daily Item

Thousands of people showed up to bid on a vast variety of items at the benefit sale at the Buffalo Valley Produce Auction, near Mifflinburg, to support the Clinic for Special Children, Strasburg. At left, Jason Martin, of Mifflinburg, a board member of the benefit auction, with his 6-year-old son, Wesley, who is treated at the Clinic for Special Children.



# UNIQUE BENEFIT, UNIQUE CAUSE

Big annual sale assists Amish & Mennonite based health center

By Cindy O. Herman  
 For The Daily Item

MIFFLINBURG — Tragedy led to the gift of life, and gratitude for that life led to a fundraiser that will help others.

In 2003, Leon and Linda Hoover became the parents of a baby boy, Raylon, born with severe combined immunodeficiency, sometimes called “bubble boy” disease.

“They get a virus, and there’s nothing there to fight it off,” Leon Hoover said.

Despite a bone marrow transplant, Raylon died in infancy, but eight years later, when the Hoover’s daughter, Kendra, was born with the same syndrome, they had a blessedly happier outcome thanks to the Clinic for Special Children, in Strasburg.

“Within six hours after her birth, we knew she had the disease,” Hoover said. Within 16 days, Kendra received a bone marrow transplant from her older sister, Esther Mae.

“I can’t say enough about how they treat every patient like they’re their own children,” Hoover said of the clinic. “They did so much for her so quickly.”

Kendra had to be isolated at home for one year, and Hoover said even a common cold resulted in

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Mifflinburg auction one of five to fund Clinic for Special Children

By Cindy O. Herman  
 For The Daily Item

MIFFLINBURG — Besides the thousands of people, multiple auctioneers and vast variety of goods being sold at the Buffalo Valley Produce Auction last Saturday, people noticed another unusual sight: children in wheelchairs.

The benefit auction raised money for the Clinic for Special Children, in Strasburg, which treats children primarily from Amish and Mennonite communities who suffer from genetic disorders.

“You go to other (benefit) auctions, and it’s inspiring, but you’re raising funds for things you can’t see,” said Kevin Strauss, MD, medical director for the Clinic for Special Children. As people milled about inspecting items for sale, he added, “But the children here are the children receiving the donations. They can feel the community support. It’s amazing.”

The benefit auction was started six years ago by Leon and Linda Hoover, Mifflinburg, after they lost one child to a genetic disorder but had a second born with the same disease and saved by early detection and treatment by clinic physicians.

“They needed more funding, so we decided to start an auction,” Leon Hoover said. “There are a lot of families in this Valley who have special

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