

Firefighters cook up aid

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The family of 10-year-old tuberous sclerosis patient Sean Carley got a taste of Windsor firefighter hospitality at a benefit dinner at the Hook and Ladder Club on Saturday.

"It's amazing," said Sean's mother, Marie Unis. "I'm just stunned by all the support. It's like another family."

Organized by Capt. Tom Lyons of the Windsor Fire and Rescue Services, the event brought in \$1,500 cash donations to help offset the family's monthly medical costs.

Lyons said the amount was raised simply by passing around the good ol' fireman's boot. "It's our customary way of collecting mone," he said.

Unis, 34, said the funds will go a long way to helping her and her husband manage Sean's regular trips to London for medical treatment—as well as those of his 20-month-old sister Emma, who suffers from cerebral palsy and a heart condition.

Sean's rare disease causes benign tumours to grow on various organs in his body, while Emma's permanent direct-to-stomach feeding tube requires constant attention. Next week, both head to London again for neurology appointments, and with four other children in the family besides Sean and Emma, things can get hectic in the Unis household.

"Sometimes, it's a lot. Sometimes it's very hard," Marie Unis said. "We take it one day at a time. It's the best we can do."

But redheaded Sean was in high spirits at the Hook and Ladder Club, where he enthusiastically set about beating his mother at pinball. "He's killing me," Marie Unis laughed.

Lyons, chief cook for the night's pasta, said he became aware of the Unis family in December when he read about Sean's letter to Santa asking for good health.

"We said, 'You know what? We'll do a fundraiser for this family.' We figured we could help out."



Sean Carley