Baptist Health hosts BabyFest 2026

NITA JOHNSON
CORRESPONDENT

CORBIN — A sweet innocent smile. The coo of a newborn baby. The giggle of a young child. These are the moments that linger in the hearts of loved ones welcoming a new life into the world.

And that monumental time was celebrated Nov. 3 at The Corbin Center with Baptist Health's annual BabyFest 2026.

Dozens of new parents and expectant parents and other family members participated in the event that offered a variety of information booths, combined with informational talks and demonstrations, food and prizes.

Mike Wynn, Director of Community Programs, gave opening remarks including some information on educational classes offered through Baptist Health Corbin and their partnership with Grace Health.

"We've partnered with Grace Health and they are here tonight to give free flu shots," Wynn said. "It's the time of year for flu and we encourage you to get yours soon."

Sherrie Mays, Chief Nursing Officer, outlined the changes coming to Baptist Health Corbin, including an updated NICU (Neonatal Intensive Care Unit).



Mike Wynn, Director of Community Programs for Baptist Health Corbin, opened the program with introduction of vendors and speakers. | NITA JOHNSON

"If you've been there lately, the new building will have a new ER (Emergency Room) with 35 beds," she said. "We've recently been certified as a Level 4 Trauma Center and can treat more people. The second floor is actually a step-down from ICU and is called Progressive Care. We will have 24 beds there. The third floor is ICU and will have 24 beds, whereas we currently only have 10. "

Mays added that the hospital is transitioning to all-private rooms, including the NICU where the child can stay in the room with the mother while it requires specialized treatment.

"We keep upgrading and expect to have all private rooms by the first part of 2028," she added.

Since the realm and responsibilities of parenting is just as trying as it is rewarding, other sponsors and vendors gave outlines of the resources available to new and expectant families. Tera Cobb outlined how Wellcare offers a "rewards" program for baby supplies as well as $25 monthly allowance for toothpaste, diapers, first aid supplies, free cell phone, 24/7 Nurse Advice, and other benefits through CVS. Tutoring, free GED classes and $1,000 scholarships for college, trade school and other post-secondary education are also part of the resources available.

Representatives from the Whitley County Health Department gave an overview of their programs such as WIC, Breastfeeding and the HANDS program, while the American Heart Association provided inflatable infants and demonstrations on Infant CPR.

Should a child come early, Dr. Sana Alhajri provided information about the NICU programs. Infant vaccinations and postpartum depression were also topics addressed during the program to educate and prepare for the child's and their own wellbeing.

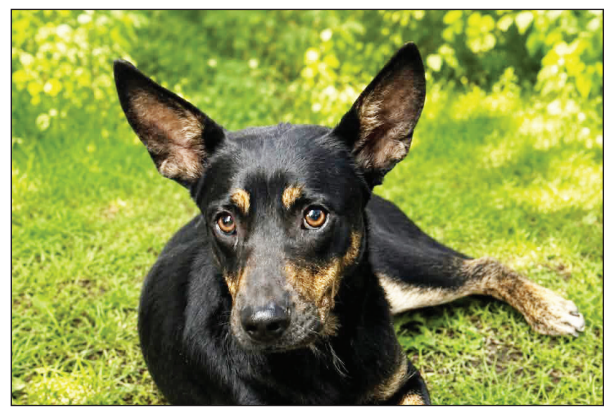
The evening was accented with various vendors, from the American Heart Association to the Whitley County Health Department. Informational flyers and supplies were available at each booth to enhance the parenting experience.

The evening was highlighted by giveaways to those registered participants, with those prizes ranging from diaper pails, Wipe Kits, a travel combo for babies, diapers and other necessities for newborns and their parents.

PETS OF THE WEEK: Sig and Luna



CAT OF THE WEEK: Luna is a male, around 2 years old. He's a very laid-back cat who would enjoy just hanging out at home. He'd do great with pretty much any family! | SUBMITTED



DOG OF THE WEEK: Sig is a 1-year-old Feist mix. She is a really sweet girl, and would do best in a family without men or a calm and patient man who is willing to work with her through her apprehension toward them. | SUBMITTED

KNOX-WHITLEY HUMANE ASSOCIATION

CORBIN — The Knox-Whitley Animal Shelter is regularly open 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Tuesdays and Fridays. They are also open 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday.

The shelter is located at 66 Busy Lane in Corbin. Call 606-526-6925 for more information.

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