

Hits and Misses: June 15, 2010

Hits

Helping babies: New parents have a great new friend in the Baby Gateway Project at Watsonville Community Hospital. The project begins bedside, with advisers helping determine whether a child qualifies for Medi-Cal and letting parents know the services available. Project organizers also help parents choose a primary care physician and a first visit is scheduled before mom and baby head home.

Raising money, awareness: Nice work by Nicky and Shawn Williams of Scotts Valley in raising awareness of Type 1 diabetes. Nicky, 10, was diagnosed with the treatable disease in May, and since then has spent a lot of time educating herself about the condition. Her dad Shawn, meanwhile, signed right up for Sunday's Tour de Cure in Palo Alto, a cycling fundraiser put on by the American Diabetes Association. Williams and a group of cycling friends raised about \$13,000. The money goes to finding a cure.

SOCCER League: Organizers of a new youth indoor soccer league aimed at keeping Mid-County youth out of trouble when school is out have scored a, well, goal!!!!!! More than 180 kids, ages 6 to 17, already have signed up for the free Mid-County/Live Oak Youth Futsal League, sponsored by Live Oak Family Resource Center, Live Oak School District, the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Activity League and Communities Organized for Relational Power in Action, a coalition of religious groups and nonprofits. It's a great idea and a great start. To volunteer or to get more info, call 476-7284, ext. 104.

Misses

No shows at the polls: The final figure is still being tallied, but it looks like county voter turnout in last Tuesday's primary will hit around 36 percent. Successful democracy depends on educated voters taking part in the political process. Poor showing, Santa Cruz County.

Negative campaigning: We understand the effectiveness of negative campaigning. Cast your opponent in a harsh light through the use of half-truths and exaggerated claims, and win votes. It's been going on since elections immemorial. We detest it, though, and are doubly disappointed when it happens in our own backyard. But that's what has erupted in the race between Democrat John Laird and Republican Sam Blakeslee in the race for the 15th District state Senate seat. Yes, it's a high-stakes race and guilt-by-association claims can fire up each candidate's political base, but it does nothing to elevate the level of political discourse. They can do better. We deserve better.