

Northern Cambria student organizes walk-a-thon

By Audrey Brothers-Konior
 for Mainline Newspapers

Some people are born leaders. They set an example and their enthusiasm is easily conveyed to others who follow in their direction.

Seventeen year-old Joshua "Josh" Griffiths will be a senior at Northern Cambria High School in the fall. He is a member of the Family Career Community Leaders of America (FCCLA). The club's advisor is Melissa Welsh.

The Northern Cambria High School chapter of FCCLA was formed in 2006, Griffiths said. Approximately 12 others are members of the group, as well.

Together members have taken part in various activities, including planting a community garden of tulips in front of the school, assisted in supporting breast cancer research and local food pantries. "We just try to do good things," Griffiths said.

He indicated that Welsh is a graduate of Cambria Heights High School, where she was a member of that school's FCCLA chapter. "She's a very good influence because of that," Griffiths stated.

The next fundraiser that the NC chapter is planning is a walk-a-thon that will benefit autism. It

will take place on July 18 at the Northern Cambria Track and Field complex. The walk will begin following registration, which begins at 9 a.m.

Information packages are currently available at the City Hotel, Mile Level Physical Therapy and Charlson's furniture store in Northern Cambria.

Griffiths has five other students on his committee. They are: Julie Pawlikowski, Shane Sedlmyer, Jessica Rocco, Janae Dunchak and Jenn Bobik.

Denise Horne, NC's school nurse, has a son with autism, Griffiths indicated. "She's been really helping us a lot," he said.

One in 100 people on average are diagnosed with autism.

The goal of the walk-a-thon is set at \$3,000. Anyone who would like to sponsor a walker or make a lump sum donation may send it in care of Josh Griffiths, 111 Hickory Street, Northern Cambria, PA 15714. Checks may be made payable to NC-FCCLA. Donations from any person or area businesses will be accepted and are greatly appreciated.

"Autism is in the community. It's a growing problem and this has been a real eye opener for all of us," said Griffiths.

Josh's parents are Christina and Mike Griffiths. His stepfather is Jack Rakaczky.

