

FCCLA WEEK CELEBRATES LEGACY OF REESE BARKER

By Ron Barry

If you go by Crockett County High School Friday, don't be surprised if you see a T-Rex wearing a party hat and eating some birthday cake.

No, it won't be the dinosaur's birthday – that belongs to someone who's left a much larger imprint than a prehistoric monster.

It's Reese Barker's birthday, and the CCHS FCCLA – the organization she served as president before the auto accident that took her life back in August – will continue to celebrate its #LiveLikeReese challenge that has positively impacted so many students, faculty, staff, and friends this school year.

All week long, FCCLA Week has been rededicated as #LiveLikeReese Week, with each day highlighting one of the marvelous teenager's passions.

Tuesday was Pickle Day, because Reese loved pickles and "thought they were a really big dill." Students wore green or anything pickle-related, and Crockett's Food Science class even canned pickles to honor their fallen classmate. They did so because "pickles are cucumbers that believed in miracles."

Wednesday was Pink Out Day – Reese's favorite color – and it was everywhere throughout the school.

On Thursday, everyone was encouraged to wear their #LiveLikeReese attire and participate in Random Acts of Kindness Day, in which Cavalier nation was to do something especially kind for someone else, paying it forward – one of Reese Barker's trademark traits.

And Friday is the Dino Party, a celebration of Reese's birthday and the ancient animals who meant so much to her. If you have something with a dinosaur on it, that's the fashion trend for the day.



Above: FCCLA leaders in various shades of green for Pickle Day.

In cooperation with the FCCLA, three local drink-based businesses – Nutrition on the Farm, Crockett Nutrition, and Stir Crockett – have been offering special order items to help the organization raise money for the Reese Barker Memorial Sensory Room Project. A portion of the sales throughout the week from both businesses will go to this endeavor to create a lasting tribute.

Nutrition on the Farm – which has also advertised it will be doing something special Saturday to honor Reese's birthday – has been offering Loaded, Specialty, and Beauty drinks, as has Crockett Nutrition. Stir Crockett has been turning drinks pink from its existing menu in order to help raise funds as well.

Reese, the daughter of Heather and David Barker – he's Crockett's softball coach, a team Reese played on, and the offensive coordinator for the football team, which Reese served as a manager – was known for her extraordinary desire to serve others and bring them joy. Her family has carried on that desire by dedicating a monthly #LiveLikeReese project to the community.

February's choice was a two-part project that involved making sure every student at CCHS received a Valentine's Day card and a blow-pop sucker (Reese never liked it when others were left out of an event). The family organized the acquisition of the cardstock, ribbon, and computer ink to prepare them all, and sent every member of the school faculty a Valentine too.

The second part of the project for February is participation in Random Acts of Kindness Month, because Reese loved doing little things to make others happy, loved, and appreciated.

"We made little bags filled with random acts of kindness cards, and small gifts to make someone feel special," Heather said. "We distributed the cards to every student at the high school along with their Valentine; the cards give ideas on how to be kind and little things you can do to help make someone's day. We will also be making kindness treats for several others as well throughout the community – others who go above and beyond each day."

It's obvious that Crockett Countians are happy to try to continue the #LiveLikeReese challenge. So let those dinosaurs party on Friday – just watch out for pterodactyls flying overhead.



Above: Reese Barker – her impact lives on and on.



Above: This shirt not only refers to pickles but contains a level of sarcasm Reese Barker would appreciate.

Right: Crockett's Food Science class joined in the celebration by actually canning pickles.



Above: #LiveLikeReese gift bags were prepared for distribution.



Above: Pink Out Day was next, and the FCCLA members went all out.



Above: Random Acts of Kindness Day extended to staff members.

Left: A dinosaur scrunchie even made an appearance.

Right: FCCLA leaders get balloons ready for the Dino Party Friday that will celebrate Reese Barker's birthday.



Above: Nutrition on the Farm, Crockett Nutrition, and Stir Crockett offered special drink menus to help raise money for the Reese Barker Memorial Sensory Room.

Left: Students dressed accordingly, remembering their fallen classmate.

