

## Sporting clays growing in popularity

### Tournaments used as fundraisers.

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A shooter takes aim at a clay bird during the Valley Youth House Sporting Clays Tournament at Lehigh Valley Sporting Clays on Friday.

Golf tournaments have become increasingly popular as fundraisers for charitable and nonprofit organizations.

In the Lehigh Valley, there's another kind of tournament that is becoming an attractive alternative or secondary source to golf.

Last Friday, the first Valley Youth House Sporting Clays Tournament took place at Lehigh Valley Sporting Clays in Ironton.

Valley Youth House, which provides shelter and support for homeless, abandoned and abused children, also holds an annual golf tournament, but added the sporting clays event this year.

"When we do community events like this," said David Gilgoff, the president and chief executive officer of Valley Youth House, "it's not only about raising funds, but it's also about educating the community to the work the agency does with the kids and their families.

"These events are very important for us. In this economic climate, it's nice to see so many people and businesses come out and support our event. It's heartwarming."

Jeff "Mac" McCausland of Valley Youth House said the inaugural sporting clays event drew 84 shooters and raised more than \$7,000. While that's pretty good, it's a drop in the bucket for an agency that sees 10,000 children annually and has a staff of 300.

Valley Youth House's slogan is "because every kid deserves a chance," and at tournaments such as these the agency can showcase success stories. Valley Youth House certainly took advantage of that last week.

Following a barbecue lunch, Frank Capozzi told his story of overcoming drug-dealing parents and living in the Northampton County Juvenile Detention Center to finding a foster parent and Valley Youth House to offer counseling and support. He graduated high school and is attending community college.

Jason Reyda is another success story, going from being homeless in high school to becoming a master plumber. Today at 31, he is employed, runs a side business and took part in the sporting clays tournament.

"Valley Youth House offered me the chance for independent living," said Reyda, who learned skills such as budgeting, checkbook-balancing, shopping and even cooking while in the Valley Youth House program that assists kids who are too old for foster care but unsure about how to live on their own.

"I can't say enough good things about the people at Valley Youth House," Reyda continued. "If a kid wants a chance, he's in the right place. They'll give you the core structure. You just have to run with it.

"When things were down and the cards seemed stacked against me, I never doubted what my future would be. I always knew I'd make it, and I'm very grateful to Valley Youth House for everything they did for me there."

The day featured a shoot-off for the top individual prize. Randy Dotter and John Citorella both shot 100 out of 102 to tie for first, and Dotter won a shoot-off to determine the winner.

Judy Daddona won the ladies high overall, while the high overall squad was Jay Schauger, Ricky Fung-A-Fat, James Martyn, Citorella and Dotter. The fivesome of Jim Bambu, Dick Wilson, Stan Theodoredis, Carl Popadakus and Hal Lubsen finished second.

In sporting clays, shotgunners go to various stations (like holes in golf) and attempt to shoot clay birds -- actually clay spheres -- after the targets are launched from a machine.

Good Shepherd is running a sporting clays tournament on May 8, while Lehigh Valley Sporting Clays offers a variety of programs other than tournaments, from shooting instruction to programs for women and children.

For information on the facility and its programs, visit <http://www.lvsclays.com> .  
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