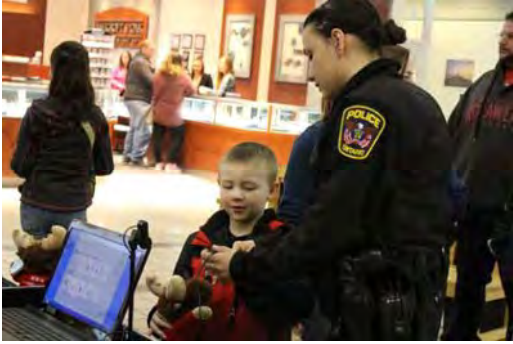




Lexington Moose Lodge 2511 Sponsors ID Event at the Richland Mall

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It's not something a parent likes to think about.

"What if one day my child is lost or abducted?"

Ammie Shepherd of Galion said the thought scares her. "It brings tears to my eyes just thinking about it," she said.

She, joined by fiancé Kyle Wyman, brought her son and stepson to the annual Child Safety Identification Program "Safe Surfin'" at the Richland Mall on Saturday.



Sponsored by Lexington Moose Lodge #2511, the program provided parents with a CD that contains their child's information, fingerprints and pictures.

Scott Gossett, administrator of the local Lexington Moose Lodge and state chairman for the Safe Surfin' Foundation EZ ID Systems, said the program isn't meant to be a last resort, but a safe-keeping measure.

"We want to be part of that first response," he said.

According to Sgt. Jon Ahles with the Mansfield Police Department, the information is very helpful "for the simple fact in today's computer age if we have a CD that's got the fingerprints, all that stuff, it can go out to all of our units and dispatch can put that out wherever it needs to go."

The fourth annual event drew participation from every law enforcement agency in Richland County, the U.S. Marshals, F.B.I, 179th Airlift Wing and 200th RED HORSE Squadron, Ahles said.

There were also K-9 demonstrations throughout the event.

Gossett said they planned on serving 100 children. "That's a great number, but even if we only helped one child, we did our job," he said.

No information on the children was kept by the officers.

Gossett said the Moose Association sponsors events like these throughout the state and nation, even abroad.

"We've really pushed it hard in the state of Ohio the last six, seven years, since I've been doing this," he said. "It's just something I care about. We care about the kids."

To learn more about this service, contact Gossett at 419-884-9600.