

6-year-old trades birthday gifts for canned goods

Written by Deb Egenberger

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There was this electronic room where a projector put pictures of these bubble things on the floor and everyone jumped around to pop them.

It would do balls too and kids could kick them. Even soccer.

And there was this one room where there was a whole wall of these red pokey things. You could stick your hand in it or your leg or even your whole body.

When you went around to the other side, it was like a picture of you.

Everything was kid proof.

Keaton Fattig of Brady gets pretty excited when she describes the different rooms and themes at the North Platte Children's Museum where she took nine of her friends for a birthday party.

"My favorite thing is playing the piano," Keaton says.

Turning 6 years old is great, "but my mom says I'm not old enough yet to take piano lessons."

That time will come.

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For now, though, Keaton likes to learn. She enjoys kindergarten so much that when there is no school on Fridays, she's disappointed.

"I'd just much rather go to school," she says.

She's learning to count by 10s and recognize sight words.

Her teacher, Beth Boden, is reading the class "Ramona the Pest."

"She's not naughty but sometimes Ramona gets into stuff she's not supposed to," Keaton says. "Like my sister."

Keaton, who turned 6 on Jan. 13, is the daughter of Holly and Matt Fattig.

She's an ordinary kindergartner with an extraordinary vocabulary and she likes chicken noodle soup, pears and corn.

"Not green beans," she says wrinkling her nose. "I only like green beans if they're in casseroles."

Keaton built a pyramid of all kinds of canned goods that she delivered to the Brady Food Pantry last week, including yucky green beans and collard greens, "whatever that is."

It was a special stack of cans because Keaton asked her friends not to bring presents to her birthday party. She wanted canned goods for the food pantry instead.

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“I have so much stuff at home,” Keaton says of her toys and clothes and coloring books. “I don’t need any more stuff.”

Mom and dad agreed, so together they came up with the idea to ask for cans for the food pantry instead of birthday presents.

Keaton says she didn’t miss out on opening packages completely. A couple of the friends who came to her party brought both.

And of course Keaton still got presents from her grandparents, along with a couple of extra canned items.

In all, Keaton donated 19 canned goods to the food pantry.

After she helped put the cans away on the proper shelves, she said she might do something like this again.

“Next year I’ll turn 7,” she said, emphasizing the word seven. “That’s pretty old.”