

**Kenny Howell**

*Managing Editor*

Stoner Creek third grade teacher Jamie Irwin made a trip to Newtown, Conn. recently with the 26.4.26 Foundation, and presented the Newtown Youth Academy with a check for \$30,000.

Irwin helped form the 26.4.26 run that was held in Nashville in December with founder Robbie Bruce. People were asked to donate at least \$1 for every mile they ran in the event. Some went just a few miles and some ran the full marathon. When they were done, \$30,000 had been raised.

The mission of 26.4.26 according to their website is “to provide funding for the families of victims, memorials for teacher heroes and to increase safety in schools across the country through the efforts of the running and endurance communities in Nashville and throughout the United States.”

They want to get kids more active and create more opportunities for team sports and team building activities to help better mental health and social skills.

That started with the Nashville run, but it isn't going to stop there.

"It's going to be a national thing," said Bruce. There already is another run planned for Gilford, NH on April 13.

Irwin found out she would be traveling to Newtown and reached out to her fellow teachers.

"Stoner Creek is already involved," said Irwin who sent a message out to everyone to help in any way they could, and before she left she already had \$500 on her desk from fellow teachers.

While they were there, they helped organize another run for Newtown. At the Nashville run, instead of bibs and time chips, runners ran with an angel with one of the victims' names on it. When they did the same thing in Newtown, that process meant a lot more. The people running were seeking the names of friends and family members that they lost on that tragic day. Bruce and Irwin said they were both moved by the moment. He said while everyone was running for a child they did not know in the Nashville race, it was different for the Newtown race.

"It was something that was personal to them," said Bruce.

They also met Kaitlin Roig, who was the first grade teacher that huddled all her children in a bathroom while the shooting was happening. Irwin and Bruce talked with her about what they could do in the future and Roig is now on the board of 26.4.26.

If you are interested in donating You can mail them to: Nashville Running Company, 1105 Woodland St.,

Nashville, TN 37206. Or you can visit <http://www.x3gear.com/collections/donations>. Please email [26for26Run@gmail.com](mailto:26for26Run@gmail.com) with any questions.

## **Stoner Creek teacher travels to Newtown**

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