

Youngsters participate in Globetrotters' event

By Bruce Campbell
Staff Writer

Any one who went by the Booker T. Washington Center at noon Monday would have been greeted by the sound of kids dribbling basketballs for a purpose.

More than 70 players participated in the Harlem Globetrotters' annual summer Some Playtime Is Necessary (SPIN) event.

They were a part of a worldwide event intended to establish a Guinness world record by simultaneously dribbling basketballs in the name of fitness.

The kids participating were eligible to receive one of the 250,000 vouchers for a complimentary ticket to a Globetrotters' game on their 2009 World Tour.

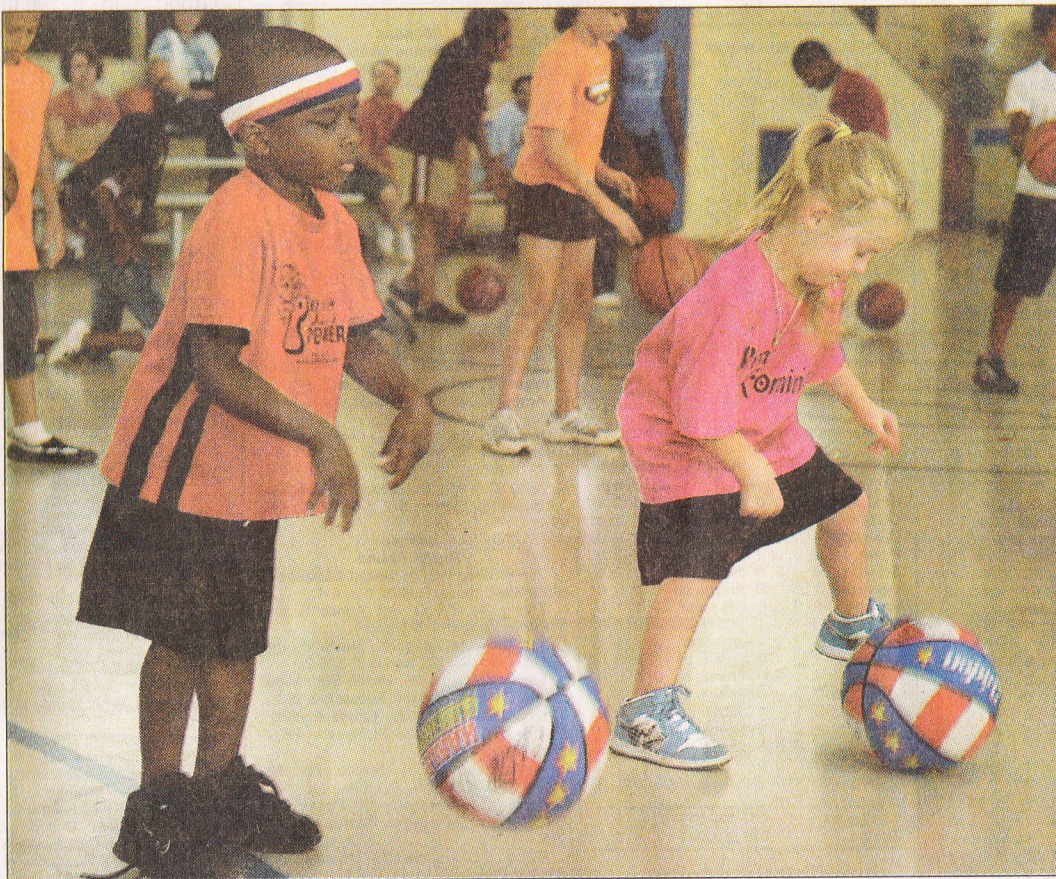
Samuel Hill of Helping Elevate Sportsmanship (HSE), which helped organize the event locally, said the event was more than to set a world record or get a free ticket.

"The Globetrotters just want kids to have fun," Hill said.

"It's important that kids continue to be active every single day in order to lead a healthy, well-rounded life," said Trotters star Wildkat Edgeron in a release from the team.

Edgeron and his teammates were leading the activities at various YMCAs across the country.

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Samuel Hill (left) and Brooklyn Wilson dribble basketballs Monday at Booker T. Washington Community Center. More than 70 players participated in the Harlem Globetrotters' annual summer Some Playtime Is Necessary (SPIN) event and were a part of a worldwide event intended on establishing a Guinness world record by simultaneously dribbling basketballs in the name of fitness. (Staff Photo by BILLY HEFTON)

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Hill had only a week to organize the event after being informed by the team. HSE is on the team's contact list. The organization bought 55 tickets for children when the Globetrotters recently came to Oklahoma City.

"I was surprised to hear from them because we're a small group," Hill said.

Pioneer High School's Jerica Cole was one of the volunteers who gave the kids some tips before they started the project.

"I wanted to show them how fun basketball can be," she said.

The participants dribbled with their left hand for two minutes, their right hand for two minutes and dribbled it forward for two minutes.

The Globetrotters told groups they could have their own dribbling routine.

"I saw a lot of smiles out there," Hill said. "This was the first introduction to the Harlem Globetrotters for some of these kids."

"The thing we wanted to do was to reach kids. We had kids here staying out of trouble and doing something for the community. That makes it worth it."

Cole is a four-year volunteer with the program.

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— Samuel Hill

more than the kids," Cole said.

"Our volunteers have been great," Hill said. "Jerica is giving back to the community as a mentor to these kids."

Hill said he wished to thank the BTW Center for providing a gym at the last

minute.

"That saved us from having to do this outside," Hill said. "They do a lot for these kids."

Hill took a picture and video to be sent to the Trotters. Hill said he hoped the Trotters would send a response.