

Stars to be in foster care meet professional country singer Jaime Fox

Published: Monday, May 17, 2010



By LESLIE POSTER, Press Staff

MIDDLETOWN — Country singer Jaime Fox was the opening act of the Family Music Festival, an event held at Wadsworth Mansion Sunday afternoon to recognize National Foster Care Month. Though Fox played for a large crowd at the event, she attended a more intimate gathering Sunday morning at Javapalooza Café on Main Street.

At the coffee shop, she met Jacqueline, 15, Alexandria, 15, and Elizabeth, 16, three foster children with an interest in singing professionally. Over coffee and crepes, the girls talked about performance anxiety, recording and even their favorite “American Idol” contestants.

(Leslie Poster | The Middletown Press) Clockwise, from left, Alexandria, social worker Cynthia Vergauwen, Jacqueline, and country singer Jaime Fox discuss an upcoming concert Sunday morning while having breakfast at Javapalooza in Middletown. Jacqueline and Alexandria, along with Elizabeth, not pictured, are foster children with musical aspirations who dined with Fox to learn more about how to become a professional singer.

A CD called “We All Need Somebody” was recorded at RVP studio in West Haven to promote foster-care recruitment and the three girls were the stars of the album’s title song, according to Jacqueline Ford, state-wide recruiter for foster care and adoption. The CD also features up-and-coming local artists.

Ford said that Fox was chosen for the concert because of her involvement with the foster-care cause, which includes recording a song titled “Walk Me Home” that has been used as the title theme song for the national walk for foster care.

Fox, originally from Tennessee, said she became involved with the cause when a woman from Georgia contacted her about four years ago and asked her to record a song for foster care awareness. The song would later be called “As Big as My Heart.” She has recorded three songs related to foster care.

“I’m touched by the cause,” she said, adding that she has enjoyed being able to give back through her music.

With their social workers, Cynthia Vergauwen, Cindi Putney and Elizabeth Hazelwood, as well as Angie Hinkel, a liaison between the Department of Children and Families and foster parents for the Connecticut Association of Foster and Adoptive Parents, the girls hoped to learn more about how to become a performer.

“They want to be singers, and they have such talents, so we thought she could give them some tips,” Ford said on organizing the breakfast meeting.

Jacqueline wanted to ask Fox what it was like “to be what she is and how did she get this far.”

“I want to be just like that and have that experience in my life,” Jacqueline said.

“It’s fun to be close to someone that’s a professional singer and ask for advice and stuff like that,” Elizabeth said.

Fox wasn’t the only person at the breakfast table performing later that day. All three girls would later perform at the concert. Jacqueline would perform “Favorite Girl,” a song originally recorded by pop singer Justin Bieber, and Elizabeth would perform “Hallelujah,” a song originally written and recorded by Leonard Cohen and later made popular by both Jeff Buckley and Rufus Wainwright.

Alexandria performed a rendition of the “Star Spangled Banner.” Fox asked Alexandria what she enjoyed most about performing.

“Afterwards, when everybody cheers for me,” she said.

“I bet it’s going to happen today,” Fox said, and offered Alexandria some tips on having a permanent marker ready for adoring fans seeking autographs.

Leslie Poster can be contacted by e-mail at lparkers@middletownpress.com.