

# Redlands neighborhood eagerly awaits Boys and Girls Clubhouse

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After 11 years of planning and fundraising, the Boys and Girls Club of Redlands' first permanent clubhouse is taking shape on Lugonia Avenue.

The 9,600-square-foot building at Lugonia and Clay Street is in the heart of the Northside neighborhoods that the club has long sought to serve.

The \$4 million project should be finished only weeks after the club celebrates its 40th anniversary on Aug. 30, said P. T. McEwen, the club's chief professional officer.



**Greg Vojtko / The Press-Enterprise**

The clubhouse will "let us service more kids in a facility designed for kids," said P.T. McEwen, of the Boys and Girls Club of Redlands.

"It's going to let us service more kids in a facility designed for kids," McEwen said.

The club held a final fundraiser on June 1 to help raise a portion of the \$195,000 needed for the building's solar panel system, McEwen said. San Bernardino County District Attorney Mike Ramos and Redlands Mayor Jon Harrison helped host the event, and donors signed a keystone that will be placed in front of the building.

Solar panels on the south side of the building's roof will provide about 35 percent of the club's electricity.

Local donors also raised about \$700,000 to help pay for furnishings and long-term maintenance. Other funding came from county and federal grants.

Documents show the club existed in some form in the 1940s and '50s, McEwen said, and was disbanded before being reorganized formally in 1967. The club's first home was a citrus packinghouse on Sixth Street that has since been torn down.

The clubhouse won't take the place of on-site programs at Mentone and Bryn Mawr elementary schools, McEwen said.

Organizers expect 150 to 200 children and teenagers to visit the building daily. The club's annual membership is about 500 youths.

The building includes a wellness center, administrative offices, art and music classrooms, a computer lab and a multipurpose room with games and a movie screen.

A teen center will give students older than 13 a place to lounge with a big-screen television, couches and a pool table.

Neighborhood parents and children appear to be keeping an eye on the project, said Mike Guillot, superintendent for Rancho Cucamonga-based G.C. Builders.

Visitors come by several times a week to ask when it's going to open, Guillot said.

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