

Turkey Time

By MEGAN MCCLAIN, Staff Writer
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REDLANDS - The children of the Boys & Girls Club of Redlands were treated Tuesday to a lunchtime Thanksgiving feast by Redlands' Noon Kiwanis Club.

The Kiwanis members held their weekly meeting at the Boys & Girls Club, and shared their turkey feast with more than 65 Boys & Girls Club members, who were scattered among the Kiwanis members.

The noon feast was an idea of Kiwanis President George Barich when he took over the club's presidency.

"It was a project I wanted to do," Barich said. The Kiwanis Club holds children as a priority, and has a history of associations with the Boys & Girls Club.

The Kiwanis Club had Gerrard's Market cater the lunch, which included turkey, mashed potatoes and gravy, stuffing, green beans and pumpkin pie for around 135 people.



*Noon Kiwanis member Melissa Ruiz-Morse, left, hands 8-year-old Destiny Young a turkey dinner Tuesday at the Kiwanis meeting held at the Boys and Girls Club of Redlands. The club hosted a Thanksgiving feast for the young members.
Megan McClain/Staff*

"It was very delicious," said 10-year-old Boys & Girls Club member Benjamin Yanez of Redlands. "It was very nice of them to do it."

Surrounded by laughing children, Donna Ferracone, vice president of the Noon Kiwanis Club, enjoyed sharing lunch with the children.

"Our focus is youth," she said, "It's nice to be able to see the kids and interact with them."

"For some of these kids, this will be the only Thanksgiving dinner they will get this week," she said.

The tables were decorated with pine cone turkeys some of the children had made as an art project, and some placemats were linen decorated with paint stamping, also using a pine cone.

Beverages were provided by Circle K, organized by marketing managers Luis Campor and Dara Singh.

"We wanted to donate our time and some drinks to help with the dinner," Campor said. Circle K staff handed out soda, juice and water to the crowd.

The participation of Circle K in the event helped the district earn credit for a sales contest, which had as a requirement participating in a Boys & Girls Club event.

"Helping them helps us too," Campor said.

Boys & Girls Club staff offered tours of the new clubhouse before and after the meeting, and also gave a presentation about the club to the Kiwanis members. They showed videos, including one of the children talking about the Boys & Girls Club's effect on their lives, and had two speakers.

Mark Davis, director of program services, talked about his experiences with the Boys & Girls Club. Sarah Benson, 17, talked about how doing community service time with the Boys & Girls Club led to her being involved with the club's teen program, and how it changed her life.

At the end of the meeting, the Boys & Girls Club staff gave a framed certificate of appreciation to the Kiwanis Club, and in turn the Noon Kiwanis Club donated \$1,500 to help sponsor the Boys & Girls Club's efforts to serve children in need.

On top of the donation, Kiwanian Roy Sheeley donated his winnings from the weekly 50-50 raffle to the Boys & Girls Club.

The leftovers from the lunch were packed up and sent home with the children.

Young members of the Boys & Girls Club approached Barich after the event, asking if they would be back next year, and members of both clubs feel that the event was a success.

"It looks like it will be an ongoing event for us," Barich said.

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