



PRESS RELEASE

Local Couple Share Lasting Holiday Memories with at-risk Children

The Community Outreach Ministry recently held its 14th annual Angel Tree Christmas party at the Elks Lodge No. 2591 in Wildomar on December 14. More than 200 children of all ages and ethnic backgrounds were adopted to receive gifts and those children who came enjoyed a Christmas dinner as well as festive activities.

Founded in 2000 by Bob and Mona Davies, the Community Outreach Ministry serves Southwest Riverside and is committed to helping at-risk children break the cycle of poverty, illiteracy, crime and incarceration. The husband and wife team offer intervention through emergency services, outreach, camping and year-round programs giving kids a second chance to be winners and champions.

The mission of the non-profit organization is to help youth achieve a sense of purpose through programs such as camping trips and holiday parties. The organization solicits gifts for the children it serves; some of whom have incarcerated parents, Mona Davies said. Families in need contact the ministry in a number of ways including referrals from Angel Tree, 211, school social services, churches and non-profits.

"The reason why we do this is because the children's parents are incarcerated and the kids would not have any Christmas gifts [if we did not host this party]," Mona Davies said. "One or both of the parents may be incarcerated or one of the parent's has been killed or is not around so the children may not have either parent. They may only have a caregiver who is not a parent."

The Davies provide both services and fun-filled events such as the Angel Tree Christmas party to area children up to the age of 18 who may never live with one or both parents because a number of these adults are incarcerated for life, Mona Davies said. In addition to providing numerous services, the Davies also host an annual Holiday party which lasts for approximately three hours. Through local sponsors such as area doctors, dentists and businesses, the Davies is able to provide hundreds of gifts to the children.

El Pollo Loco delivered meals for the huge crowd which consisted of chicken, rice, beans, tortillas and salsa. Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District donated bottled water and Dalia Smith donated 200 festive cupcakes. Twenty plus children from Mt View Church of Wildomar lit up the party with Christmas carols. Additional sponsors include Dr. Michael Fenlong, Dr. Jeff Prais, Massage Envy, Curves for Women, Fitness 19, Wells Fargo, Nike, Neighborhood Healthcare, Zephyr Partners, Just Serve, Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints, Wellness and More, Ivy Springs/SD Premiere Properties, Visiting Angels, Omega Statistics, Mangar Medical Package and Murrieta Beauty Salon.

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"We contact the caregiver and ask for a wish list for clothing and fun gifts," Mona Davies said. "Then we find sponsors to shop and wrap gifts that are presented at the party. We want the children to know the gift is from their absent parent. It makes the children happy to be remembered and it also helps the parent know they have done something for their child. It also gives hope to the parent and to the child."

The Angel Tree Christmas party begins each year at the Elks Lodge No. 2591, Mona Davies said. In the parking lot, local U.S. Forestry Firefighters engage children by offering them tours of fire trucks while also teaching them safety tips. The California Highway Patrol is on board at the event and donates gifts to the children, and volunteer explorer's from the U. S. Border Patrol set up and serves the children food. Elite Solutions and Wells Fargo each sent ten volunteers to sign in children and passed out gifts.

When children are not relocated by caregivers and maintain a lasting relationship with Community Outreach Ministry, almost all of them graduate from high school and find gainful employment as young adults, Mona Davies said, adding that some of the children graduate from college and become the first in their families to achieve this goal.

We welcome sponsors, donors and volunteers to get involved in year round programs to enrich our children and make our community a better place. Contact us at 951-698-7650 or send an email to info@communityoutreachministry.org.



Brothers Ayden and Vaylen Perez of Murrieta ~ Miss Inland Cities, Isabel Donadio of Menifee with Rebekah Jenkins of Lake Elsinore ~ Veronica Melena, daughter Victoria and son Arturo of Perris

The article has been written by: Lynn Loyd and the photos are courtesy copies of Community Outreach Ministry.