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Developing an altruistic spirit

New group gives Granite Bay boys chance to give back to their community

By: Eileen Wilson Granite Bay View Correspondent



If you've seen groups of boys performing good deeds around town, it's likely you've witnessed Boys Team Charity in action.

Boys Team Charity is a national organization with a brand new chapter in Granite Bay, thanks to chapter founder, Heidi Davis-Spargo.

If you're wondering what Boys Team Charity is all about, then wonder no more. The group was founded in Arizona more than a decade ago. Their focus is on developing the altruistic spirit in young men by offering opportunities to give back to the community in meaningful ways. The group fosters both personal and community responsibility.



For more information on Boys Team Charity, visit <http://btcgranitebay.chapterweb.net>.

Julie McAvoy, Granite Bay chapter's vice president of membership, was thrilled to help open a local chapter of an organization that would give her son the chance to give back to his community. McAvoy was intrigued with a charity that functioned much like the Granite Bay

chapter of National Charity League, which offers philanthropy opportunities and cultural development for girls.

"We went through National Charity League with our girls — we wanted our boys to have the same opportunities volunteering and helping others in the community," McAvoy said. "The experiences my girls had broadened their world and opened their eyes to want to help others."

McAvoy's two daughters, since graduating from high school, have worked in villages in Africa and one of her daughters will go to the Philippines this year to help impoverished families.

Like National Charity League, the Granite Bay chapter of Boys Team Charity comprises of seventh-through 12th-graders who live in the Eureka Union School District or Granite Bay High School attendance area. Teenagers are also eligible if they attend Granite Bay High School on an inter-district transfer.

The charity isn't just about boys. It's about boys developing strong bonds with family members who are encouraged to volunteer alongside them.

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“We chose this national charity because the emphasis is on community service. That, and the other criteria that was important to me — that both parents would be able to volunteer with their boys,” Davis–Spargo said.

Spearheading a local organization for boys so they might experience philanthropy was an easy decision for Davis–Spargo.

“I’ve been involved with National Charity League with my girls over the years and it occurred to me that it would be great if there was something like it for boys. So I started asking around,” she said. “It was a matter of identifying some parents who would be willing to be on the board.”

Identifying prospective board members and a group of initiates was easy.

“We limit each grade level to 26 boys, and we filled three classes right away,” Davis–Spargo said. “We are still taking applications for boys entering ninth, 11th and 12th grades. For the other classes, we have waiting lists.”

Davis–Spargo says the community’s response to the charity has been overwhelming.

“People say, ‘It’s about time. We’ve been looking for an organization like this,’” Boys Team Charity really fills a need,” she said.

While boys and their parents are bonding and learning to work together, charities throughout the area benefit, as well. The group has more than a dozen charities they will help, including Ronald MacDonald House in Sacramento, Roseville public libraries and Cycles 4 Hope in Granite Bay. The boys will also tutor elementary–aged children and help with summer reading and kids’ crafts projects.

“My husband and son really enjoy working on bikes — they will help fix bikes for Cycles 4 Hope on ‘Wrench Night’ throughout the summer,” McAvoy said. “They will also clean up the American River Parkway and clean up the garden and grounds of Ronald MacDonald House. A lot of the philanthropy opportunities are outdoors, and I think that really appeals to boys.”

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