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Boys, moms unite through new service group

January 26, 2010 | By SHARON HLAPCICH

The Greater Orange Service League (GOSL) is a new service organization at Canyon High School. The new club, a chapter affiliate of the Beach Cities Service League, is for high school age young men residing within the Orange Unified School District boundaries who, together with assistance from their mothers, initiate community service projects.

Membership in the service group, which began in October, includes 35 freshmen and 30 sophomores who attend Canyon, Villa Park, El Modena, Orange Lutheran and Servite High Schools. Joe Van Marter from Canyon High School is freshman class president and Ricky Kozloski from Servite High School is the sophomore class president.

The purpose of the service league is to foster hands-on community service projects, encourage leadership responsibilities with each class holding five meetings per club year, complete a minimum of 18 service hours annually and support both chapter and league events. There are two parent advisers per class who also attend these club meetings.

Another purpose of the service league is to emphasize character-building skills pertaining to each age group. Some of these include time management skills, nutrition and fitness for ninth grade; automotive education, employment preparation for tenth grade; college readiness, interview skills for 11th grade; and, managing finances, college life and careers for 12th grade. The boys arrange for guest speakers to attend club meetings, selecting experts within their areas of emphasis.

Parent advisers also meet five times throughout the club year to help facilitate service projects, oversee organizational operations of the service league and keep the moms informed about league activities. Jody O'Donnell and Ami Kreutziger are freshman advisers and Jane Emerson-Brown and Lynn Marie Frediani are the sophomore class advisers.

One of the first service projects that the boys organized was a toy drive during the holidays. They also volunteered at the Orange County Toy Collaborative for a day of packing donated toys and then loaded the toys onto trucks for delivery.

The group also sponsored a Picture Day at Project Hope School for approximately 60 students. Picture Day was organized so that the children could have individual and class pictures. The school, which is in Orange, is dedicated to educating homeless children within Orange County.

Some of the projects scheduled for this year include working at a soup kitchen in Orange on Valentine's Day, participating in a cleaning project at Second Harvest Food Bank in April and working with special needs athletes in the Special Games scheduled at Cal State Fullerton in May.