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Laguna Niguel Rotary Club holds dental clinic

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THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

LAGUNA NIGUEL – The Rotary Club of Laguna Niguel recently held a dental clinic for students at Hidden Hills Elementary. Club members decided there were too many children who are not getting dental exams because their parents can't afford treatment.

Working with Rotarian Stephanie Oddo, who coordinated the effort, which took almost two years, Hidden Hills Elementary Principal Aida Nunez and Gabrielle Bougarides, the school's bilingual community liaison, welcomed the chance to serve their students.



Local dentists, working with dental professionals and students from AYUDA International Dental Clinic, a nonprofit humanitarian dental, medical and educational organization, provide treatment for students at Hidden Hills Elementary School in Laguna Niguel.

*PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF
LAGUNA NIGUEL*

Notices were also sent to other Laguna Niguel elementary schools and the YMCA to see if other local families needed dental treatment. Hidden Hills was chosen because of its central location in Laguna Niguel and because most of the families live within walking distance of the school.

AYUDA International Dental Clinic, a nonprofit humanitarian dental, medical and educational organization, organized the dental plan. Six dental professionals along with 60 dental students helped about 100 children. The students received a bag of dental products from the participating dentists, including Alan Nguyen, Ryan Cook, Mark Montgomery, and Bill Nguyen. The dental gift bags were put together by Webelo Boy Scouts from St. Anne School, headed by Eddie Oddo and William Cadieux.

Located in Marina Hills Shopping Center, McDonalds provided free breakfast, Starbucks provided free coffee and Subway offered half-price lunches.

Rotary Club of Laguna Niguel Gives 100 Kids Free Dental Exams

The club decided there are too many local children not getting dental exams because their parents can't afford treatment of cavity fillings and other dental work.

Posted by Debbie L. Sklar (Editor), November 5, 2012 at 02:30 pm



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(Editor's Note: Thanks to reader Ron Perrella for sending in this story and photos.)

The Rotary Club of Laguna Niguel recently decided there are too many local children who are not getting dental exams because their parents can't afford it.

Rotarian Stephanie Oddo took the lead in trying to change this, but it didn't happen overnight. In fact, it took almost two years to be able to offer a free dental clinic to many in need such as those at a Laguna Niguel school.

Since Hidden Hills Elementary is a Title 1 school (about 50 percent of the children receive FREE or reduces lunch price), principal Aida Nunez and Gabrielle Bougarides, bilingual community liaison at Hidden Hills jumped at the chance to serve the students.

Rotarian also sent out an e-blast to all the Laguna Niguel elementary school principals to find out if they also had children who needed dental services.

Rotarian Jennifer Heinen, director of the also researched local members and found a family in need.

Hidden Hills was chosen because of its central location and because most of the families do not have proper transportation, and live within walking distance of the school. The appointments were arranged by Bougarides.

While the elementary school was making the arrangements for the clinic to take place in its auditorium, Rotarians were making arrangements to get dental instructors from AYUDA. Dr. Done, head of the dental school, arranged for volunteer dental students to take care of the patients at the clinic.

AYUDA organized the entire layout and dental plan. The dental giftbags were put together by two Webelo scouts from St. Anne School, headed by Eddie Oddo and William Cadieux. Contributors of the dental goodie bag supplies were dental doctors: Ryan Cook, Mark Montgomery, Alan Nguyen and Bill Nguyen.

Rotarians are dedicated to "Service to Others" and when the call for volunteers from the club members came, Heinen, Joe Davis and wife Patty, past president Barbara Foster, Glenn Schaffer, Mike Whipple and Jan Alcide, along with the three dentist members all joined in to support the running of the clinic.

All of the patients received a bag of dental products from the participating dentists lead by contributions from Dr. Alan Nguyen, DDS.

There were about 100 children dental patients and six "hands-on" dental professional instructors, and 60 dental students who were supervised by their instructors.

Contributors to the event: McDonald's with free breakfasts, Starbucks with free coffee and Subway for half-price lunches all from the Marina Hills shopping center.



