

The Community VOICE

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Sonoma State's Rotaract Club raises funds for Haiti SHARE

By Heidi Bailey February 11, 2010 03:22 pm

The evening of Feb. 5 was a special one at Sally Tomatoes in Sonoma Mountain Village.

Sonoma State University's Rotaract club held a fundraiser in an effort to raise money to send to Haiti. "We considered it a success," said Keith Riley, former president and current treasurer of SSU Rotaract.

At Sally Tomatoes part of the regular Friday night menu is the all-you-can-eat pasta and salad buffet so in an effort to help Rotaract, for every buffet ticket sold, the club earned \$4. In addition to ticket sales, donations were made to the club from Rotary Club of Santa Rosa East and Rotary Club of Rancho Cotati. "When all is said and done, we raised close to \$800," Riley said.

And Riley doesn't think that's too shabby considering the club didn't have a lot of time to plan. "We really just wanted to get out there and do what we could to help out." The club is working with Red Cross and the money will go directly to Red Cross for Haiti.

Riley's been with SSU Rotaract for about nine months and, just like Rotary clubs, Rotaract helps local, national, and international causes. Comprised mostly of SSU students, this club recently reached out to Kenya, working with Rotary Club of Rancho Cotati through their Books and Balls donations to Africa. In the past, local outreach efforts included working closely with JUMP, (Join Us Making Progress, a student community service organization), in conjunction with the food bank collecting food donations and the club is currently working on setting up a scholarship fund for future students. Also on the horizon is possibly working with Habitat for Humanity on a future project.

For national outreach, the club is setting up a program called Alternative Spring Break where they will be taking SSU students to New Orleans to help with the ongoing rebuilding efforts from the devastating result of Katrina. This is slated to happen sometime in April over spring break.

"We're really just a younger version of Rotary," said Riley. Rotaract is geared toward ages 18 to 30. "We're trying to keep Sonoma State students active in Rotary and even though 80 percent of Rotaract needs to be SSU students, we're happy to have any community support come help us out." For more information on SSU Rotaract, contact ssurotaract@gmail.org.

OTHER NEWS

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