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Moraga Junior Women's Club makes sizable donation to New Day for Children

By Vera Kochan



New Day for Children representatives receive donation from Moraga Junior Women's Club members May 16 Photo Vera Kochan

At their end-of-year meeting at the Hacienda de las Flores on May 16 the Moraga Junior Women's Club presented a donation check in the amount of \$25,000 to New Day for Children, an organization dedicated to restoring the lives of American girls who have been rescued from sex trafficking.

The funds were raised through MJWC's fourth annual Hometown Hoedown held last February. While making the presentation to New Day, club president Jennifer McCollum stated, "It's been a pleasure to get to know your organization and bring to the attention of our community the thousands of kids sold for trafficking."

New Day's representatives, Executive Director Sharon and Primary Spokesperson Kathy (their last names are omitted for security purposes), were overcome by the size of the donation. They stated, "Two-thirds of the kids are from California and the other one-third are from other parts of the United States."

This year marks the 10th anniversary since New Day first opened its doors to help girls aged 10-18 recover their stolen childhoods. With an 80 percent success rate, this approach comes in the form of safe housing, education, character development and therapy. Kathy said, "People assume that sex trafficking is a crime only against girls, but 50 percent are crimes against boys as well."

According to New Day, "Child sex trafficking has no socio-economic, racial or cultural boundaries; every two minutes a child is sold in the U.S. for sex; there's a four to seven year life expectancy; trafficking of minor girls is the fastest growing crime in the U.S.; one out of five children will be sexually abused by the time they reach adulthood; we have served girls as young as 11 years old, some having been trafficked since age 6 or 7."

MJWC has 47 active members who devote their time and energy to philanthropic work such as Meals on Wheels deliveries, making goodie bags for patients at Children's Hospital and delivering comfort pillows to women recovering from breast cancer. McCollum explained, "To select our featured beneficiary, we compile a list of potential beneficiaries through member submissions or direct requests from organizations themselves. The club members vote, and then the top three are invited in to speak to members directly, make a brief presentation and answer questions." Their annual Spring Egg Hunt proceeds benefit local organizations, schools, parks and recreation programming or the library.

January will mark the club's 50th anniversary and while things slow down for the summer they will have recruitment booths at various summer concerts with information for anyone interested in learning more about MJWC. For more information send an email to info@moragajuniors.org or visit www.moragajuniors.org.

New Day for Children is celebrating its 10th anniversary at Hacienda de las Flores on Sunday, Sept. 22. For details, visit www.newdayforchildren.com.

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