

Christmas noodling

By: Julie Drake



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LANCASTER - Children played with toy lightsabers, basketballs, dolls and other toys at Antelope Valley High School's fourth annual holiday spaghetti lunch.

The Lopes' girls basketball team served platefuls of spaghetti, green beans, salad, green or red apples, rolls, vanilla pudding and chocolate milk. Members of the boys basketball team served in the clean-up role.

"It's a nice experience. You can see the people that support us, the people in the community that you don't really get to see so often. So it's real good to give

back," said junior Ebony Walker, 16, who plays center.

The spaghetti lunch started four years ago, health tech Alice Rice said.

"There was a need. We saw a need and we tried to fill it. We're going to do it every year," Rice said.

Everything for Friday's lunch, including the food and toys, was donated by school staff members. The lunch, which drew about 200 guests, was sponsored by the Sunshine Club. Children ages 12 and younger could select a toy from a table set up against a wall of the cafeteria. Teens could enter the raffle to win a prize including one of two bicycles. Adults also had a chance at one of two \$50 gift cards.

"It's just a lot of fun; we love doing it," Rice said.

After they finished their lunch, children sat a craft table set up by biology teacher Marco Reyes and his wife Socorro, a Spanish teacher at Quartz Hill High School. The boys and girls colored or, with the assistance of high school students, created items such as a Christmas light bracelet, a foamy gingerbread man or Santa Claus, or an ornament from special metallic-looking paper they scratched out a design on.

AV High freshman Roque Arellano, 14, played with a basketball he got as a gift after he finished lunch.

"I think it's pretty nice that the school is doing this especially because around here there's not a lot of people with a lot of money. So it's a good thing that they're doing this," Roque said.

Roque's younger brother Brian, 8, who got a lightsaber that lights up green, said he enjoyed his lunch.

Lancaster resident Leslie Arechiga brought her daughters Daisy, 11, and Ella, 8, to the spaghetti lunch.

"This is actually really nice," Arechiga said, adding she just learned about the lunch Friday morning.

Christina Paz, who has five children including a son on the boy's basketball team. Her youngest daughter, Jaylene, 5, selected a Barbie doll for her gift.

"This is good for us because it helps us out with a little toy, you know, five children is a lot," Paz said.

Marissa Barry brought her 17-month-old son Aiden to the luncheon at the suggestion of her mother, Sheryl Barry, AV High's food service manager.

"She was helping with the food and everything and she was like, 'You should come bring your son, see Santa and stuff like that,'" she said.

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