

Adult Transition Program - Capistrano Restorative Gardens and Learning Center/Herb Garden

This is a collaborate program between Capistrano Unified School District for their Adult Transition Program and San Juan Capistrano Rotary Club (SJC Rotary Club). The Adult Transition Program prepares young adults (ages 18-22) with moderate to severe disabilities for independent living and employment through individualized programs. The Herb Garden project is a workability program where the young adults learn the skills of gardening to obtain gainful employment and independence.

The grant funding will go towards plants, soil, equipment, irrigation, a weather station and educational speakers. In addition to funding, the SJC Rotary Club will also be volunteering our services twice a year to assist the students on weekend planting and weed abatement of the Herb garden.

There are approximately 20 students in the program; however, every year there are new students. The herb garden will serve hundreds of students for future years to come.

There will be approximately 125 volunteers on the 2 garden work party days. The volunteers consist of Rotarians, parents and community volunteers. Members of the SJC Rotary Club have already started working on the project. We look forward to Rotarians participating in two weekend planting events. Attached is a design plan prepared by one of our SJC Rotarians.

Project Update – This project has been designed and is planned for construction by SJC Rotarians and other volunteers in April 2020. Upon completion of the construction, the students in the program will conduct the planting. On-going planting and maintenance support is planned by SJC Rotarians in the future.

Goin' Native Therapeutic Gardens

Goin Native Therapeutic Gardens (GNTG), a nonprofit 501(c)(3) is committed to providing horticultural education, emotional and physical rehabilitation, and practical life skills to people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds, while promoting environmental sustainability and saving community resources.

GNTG works with special needs adults in the Los Rios Park area caring for the certified butterfly garden while educating, equipping and encouraging all people to connect in nature, promoting well-being. Helping Create Vocational Opportunities: Assisting the adult developmentally disabled garden angels find meaningful vocational opportunities.

The program involves approximately 20 special needs adults, and 10 volunteers from GNTG each year. These funds will be used for the coming year in support of the Monarch way station, educational lesson plans and the sensory garden. Supplies needed include tools, plants, seeds, bulbs, publications, art and craft supplies for garden projects, plant markers, aprons, hats watering cans, buckets.

We look forward to Rotarians to participating in support of this program as well.

Project Update – The SJC Rotary Club provided \$2,000 in January 2020, for tools and other supplies for this program. Members are planning to participate in the installation of the plant identification signs, purchased for Los Rios Park last year, on January 25, 2020.

Thanksgiving Food Drive

Our club along with our local Interact Clubs conducts a food drive at local markets to distribute complete Thanksgiving dinners to San Juan Capistrano families in need as well as Marine families in need at Camp Pendleton.

Members of the SJC Rotary (typically about 20-25 members; San Juan Hills HS Interact and Capistrano Valley Christian School Interact (typically about 20 teens) do the following activities on the Saturday before Thanksgiving Day:

- Collect groceries from a wish list handed out to shoppers at 4 different local grocery stores.
- Keep a tally of items so at the end of the day we can buy items that we are missing to be able to have a complete dinner.
- Help drive items to distributions point, divide groceries, fill boxes and distribute to families.

San Juan Elementary School develops a list of families in need in the community and arranges for the boxes to be picked up or delivered the day of the event. The children at San Juan Elementary school decorate the boxes for Thanksgiving. The family resource officer from the City's adopted 1/11 Marine Unit coordinates the pickup of food for families in need at the base.

The event serves 80-100 needy San Juan Capistrano and Marine Corps families at Camp Pendleton Marine Base

Project Update – The event occurred on November 23, 2019 and was a great success. The SJC Rotary Club provided 45 meals to San Juan Capistrano families and 55 meals, plus additional turkeys for Marine Corps families at Camp Pendleton Marine Base. As usual our club was supported by our San Juan Hills HS Interact Club whose members provided manned the grocery stores and packed up the meal boxes on event day. Great job everyone!

Santa's Visit

The club reaches out to 6 local elementary schools and invites children to participate in holiday crafts and a visit with Santa.

Event Day: gates open at 9:00 am. Children are treated to activities such as cookie decorating, holiday crafts, face painting etc. from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm. Mr. and Mrs. Santa arrive via Orange County Fire Authority Engine from our local Fire Station #7 and present each child with an age appropriate gift.

Rotarians and volunteers conduct the following activities:

- Toy distribution, including Spanish/English translation.
- Children's activities including cookie decorating face painting and holiday crafts.
- Decorate the Multipurpose Room at Marco Forster Middle School (MFMS) for Mr. and Mrs. Santa on stage and entry way.

The event serves about 500-600 kids

Event Date – This event occurred on December 14, 2019. There were a lot of competing events in town that day. However, we still had over 375 kids at the event participating in activities. Most importantly getting to see Santa and Mrs. Claus and The event was pulled of by more than 50 youth volunteers

Students Run Los Angeles (SRLA)

The San Juan Capistrano Rotary Club sponsors Marco Forster Middle School (MFMS) in the Students Run Los Angeles (SRLA) program. MFMS was the first middle school in the Capistrano Unified School District (CUSD) to participate in the Students Run LA Marathon Program and is now in its eleventh year. The team consists of 7th and 8th grade students from Marco as well as local high school students who ran when they were students at Marco. Coaches include teachers, administrators, and other running enthusiasts from the community, including Rotarians from our club.

The main goal or objective of SRLA is to help students work hard to set long-term goals, help with character development, and discipline. Students train together for over six months to prepare for the marathon, and experience the benefits of improved health. The program instills discipline, determination and a sense of pride in those runners who accomplish their goals. These kids typically do not have the means to pay for transportation, lodging, training and race costs for the event. The San Juan Capistrano Rotary sponsors the club in their endeavors by providing a grant to pay for transportation and lodging for these kids. Each year, we have Rotarians participating in training and the send-off for the kids on Saturday.

In addition to the support provided to the community, we notice that many of the recipients of our support later become volunteers in our community and get involved.

Project Update – This event is upcoming on March 8, 2020

1/11 Marine Unit Adoption Committee and Direct Support

The adopted Marine Corps unit for our town is the 1/11 Marine Unit. When the marines and sailors on Camp Pendleton are deployed the SJC Rotary through the 1/11 Adoption Committee and also directly support the families with various activities via their Family Readiness Officer.

Our club provides financial support to the Adoption Committee. The adoption committee works as a liaison between the community and the unit to respond to the needs of families while their loved ones are deployed.

Our direct support typically includes supplies for the events and/or funding for activities. For this coming year, we plan to encourage Rotarians to participate by volunteering at events such as the Trunk or Treat for Halloween; Thanksgiving Dinner (outlined above); Family Picnic Activities; Baby Showers and the Christmas Holiday Party. Our hope is to start by getting at least 5-10 Rotarians to participate in each event.

Each event usually supports 20-50 families

Project Update – The SJC Rotary Club funded activities for the Annual Family Holiday Party and food for Holiday Dinner in December 2019. The remainder of funds are allocated to the 1/11 Adoption Committee in support of the units family needs.