

Almaden Times

Find us online at www.almadentimes.com

Dec. 18 – Dec. 24, 2009 • Volume 23, Number 51

Almaden Valley's Weekly Community Newspaper - Since 1986

'Tis the season



Simonds Elementary School fourth and fifth graders entertained with holiday carols at the annual Rotary Holiday Luncheon held on Dec. 11 at the Almaden Community Center.

Photos by Jeanne C. Carbone

Almaden Rotary pays it forward with annual senior luncheon

By Jeanne C. Carbone
Editor

Over 200 special guests attended the eagerly anticipated annual Rotary Almaden Senior Holiday Luncheon this past Friday. And they were not disappointed.

Since the inception of the Almaden Community Center, the Rotary has provided a top-notch holiday luncheon including barbecued filet mignon, vegetables, baked potato, salad, beverages, dessert and candy canes. And in back of the center, Paul Venezio, Fred Eberle and others barbecue the steaks and squash. They comment that they "have the best job" and that their secret is mesquite charcoal.



Almaden Rotary President **Ken Tavernier** and an unidentified YMCA teen wait in line to serve their guests at the annual luncheon.

There's even holiday music provided by the melodic voices of the fourth and fifth graders from Simonds Elementary School choir under the direction of teacher Terry Bermudez. At the end of their performance, the Rotary presents the school with a \$250 check for their programs. And then raffle tickets designate the lucky winners of the poinsettias that decorate the stage and \$25 Safeway gift certificates. The club has the luncheon yearly to give back to the community, celebrate the holiday season and for another very important reason.

"Some seniors cannot afford a meal like this, some can," said Almaden Rotary Director of Community Service Paul Uenaka who has been a member of the organization for 37 years. "Some have lost a spouse, some have not, but all appreciate the social interaction at the event. And we love doing this for them."

So much so that besides orchestrating the luncheon for Almaden seniors, the Rotary has

See *ROTARY*, page 4



Almaden Rotary President **Ken Tavernier**, members **Bobbie Guisto** and **Joe Pileggi** with other Rotarians and YMCA teens wait in line to serve guests at the annual luncheon. *Photo by Jeanne C. Carbone*

Rotary

Continued from page 1

done the same for the Southside Community Center for the past 22 years. So popular are both events that it fills up immediately once announced with a waiting list—42 Almaden residents hoped for cancellations this year, said Rotary President Ken Tavernier.

But as they say, it takes a village and for the orchestration of two annual holiday luncheons, that is no exception. Besides the Rotary members coordinating the event and providing the tender cuts of beef, their spouses and YMCA teens help serve. The Almaden Community Center staff pitches in as well, and provides salads, baked potatoes, rolls and vegetables, all to make a joyous day for the seniors. And they will tell you so.

"We come every year," said Stephen Popovich, a 30-year Almaden resident who attended with wife Helen. Seated next to them were Dennis and Edith McFerrin who commented, "This is a real treat, it's delicious. We wouldn't miss it," as they enjoyed the luncheon in the gaily decorated community room of the center.

Perhaps District 10 Councilmember Nancy Pyle said it best.

"Seniors are the backbone of our community. They are always there to lend a hand or provide some wise advice. You have helped the city immensely and I feel grateful to call many of you friends," said Pyle.

"I would like to thank Ken Tavernier and all the members of Almaden Rotary who put this lunch together today. The impact that Rotary has made is astounding. They work locally to uplift those in poverty in neighborhoods like Hoffman Via Monte and passionately support international humanitarian projects," added Pyle.

The Almaden Valley Rotary Club was chartered in 1969. Its members are a group of business and professional people that do community service programs locally and globally. They meet every Thursday at noon at the Almaden Country Club. Some of their community service projects include donating and delivering turkeys for Thanksgiving and providing gifts to families in need. They hold a large fundraiser each year during the summer, the Charlie Wedemeyer championship football game, which includes graduating seniors in their last official high school game.

For more information visit www.almadenvallyrotary.org.