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the BURBANK LEADER

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Thinking inside the box



Among those who staged last weekend's Family Promise fundraiser were, from left, Ruth Devine, Jenny Greene, Harold Jordan and Sherri Cowen. (David Laurell / September 28, 2010)

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By David Laurell
September 28, 2010 | 7:34 p.m.

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That mission was made manifest this past Saturday evening and Sunday morning as hundreds of Burbankers gave up the comforts of their homes to think about what it would be like to spend the night in a box in the parking lot of the First Presbyterian Church of Burbank.

Jenny Greene serves as the president of the East San Fernando Valley chapter of Family Promise. She has been encouraged by the support the organization has received despite the economic downturn that has taken a toll on all charitable groups, she said.

"From our start as just a small group of volunteers, to now being open and running, is just amazing," said Greene. "We totally benefit from the people in our community who feel

this is a worthy cause that addresses a tremendous need."

Staged for the second time in so many years, the organization plans on making this fundraiser an annual event in which individuals, families youth groups, service organizations and local business representatives each raise a minimum of \$100 in pledges and then construct and sleep in a cardboard box "home" in order to raise awareness of homeless families in our community.

Assisting Greene in making the weekend fundraiser a successful reality was event chairwoman **Linda Taylor** who headed up her committee that included **Sherri Cowen, Diane Cripe, Ruth Devine, Marla Feinberg, Debi Felser, Beth Marcus, Deena McCarthy, Harold Jordan, Bob Nicol**, and former Burbank Mayor **Marsha Ramos**.

Among those who applied their creativity to build box homes that represented everything from tropical huts and SpongeBob SquarePants' underwater lair, to castles and military tanks, were **Adin and Jonah Ring, Don, Rose and Jordan Ackerley, Jackie and Justin Perez**, and members of the Westminster Presbyterian Church youth group including **Julia Newton, Caitlin Charles, Liliana and Isabella Schoenke, Zak Beveridge, Katie Hobson, Jazmin Williams**, and the church's youth director, **Josh Clairville**.

Throughout the evening, participants including the organization's director, **Jacqueline White**, the Rev. **Ross Purdy, Martin Knapp, Richard Zemaitis** and **Barbara Lazar** enjoyed the music of singer and songwriter **Lucy Angelo** and the Calvary Chapel Youth Band. The evening also included a soup dinner provided by **Patrick Dougherty** and Calvary Chapel Burbank Relief Team volunteers **Brian Zink, Linda Dougherty, Norma MacMillin** and **Phil Figatner**, a fencing demonstration by Swordplay of Burbank, Havdallah led by Rabbi **Richard Flom**, and various game and craft stations manned by VolunTEars **Grace Mosqueda, Sarah Tilley, Mose Marseille, Jo-Ann Diaz-de Leon** and **Georgina Stopfer** of The Walt Disney Co.

The local Family Promise chapter, formed in March of 2008, is one of more than 150 affiliates of the national organization that integrates educational outreach, smart programming, effective policies and the hands-on work of volunteers. They provide food, shelter and support services for homeless families along with advice and advocacy for at-risk families to prevent homeless.



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