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Bowled over by community support

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By David Laurell
June 19, 2011 | 10:14 a.m.

Two recent fundraisers, respectively staged by Family Promise of the East San Fernando Valley and the Burbank Arts for All Foundation, brought thousands of Burbankers out to show their compassion for families in need and to support art education in local schools.

The Empty Bowl fundraiser, which took place at the St. Finbar Community Center on June 5, saw much-needed funds raised to help Family Promise carry out its mission of providing shelter, meals and support to homeless families. Supporters selected from hundreds of handcrafted ceramic bowls made by local potters that were then filled with their choice of soups provided by area restaurants. After eating, they were asked to take their selected bowl home as a reminder of the hunger and uncertainty homeless families face daily.

Among those who donated bowls were pottery artists Margie Manos, Philleen Meskin and Ellisa Weekley, as well as ceramic artisans from the Burbank Creative Arts Center, Glendale Community College and other local arts organizations and groups.

Supporters were welcomed by Family Promise Executive Director Jaci White, board President Jenny Greene and Vice President Barbara Lazar along with board members Harold Jordan, Jean Mourn, Mary Adney, Mary Anderson-Harris, Diane Cripe, Howard Fallman, Nancy Guillen, Sandy Thompson, Vanessa Aramayo, Sam, Jr. and Kathryn Engel, Steve Ferguson, Rabbi Richard Flom, Laura Friedman, Lynn Kronzek, Bud and Laura Lovick, J.P. O'Connor, Laurie and Pat Patterson, the Rev. Ross Purdy, Patrick Thomas, Jolene Wagner, Christine Walters and former Mayor Marsha Ramos. Others in attendance included Mayor Jess Talamantes and his wife, Sandy, Dave Ramos, Mary Christensen, Richard and Lela Ramirez, Cotton Thompson and Robert Vincent.

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From an empty bowl to a full bowl — as in a sold-out Starlight Bowl — the Burbank Arts for All Foundation presented the All American Show Choir Super Show on June 11. The evening, which began with a VIP reception attended by Rep. Adam Schiff (D-Burbank), Mayor Jess Talamantes and numerous city officials and representatives from the Burbank Unified School District, presented performances by the show choirs of John Burroughs and Burbank high schools.

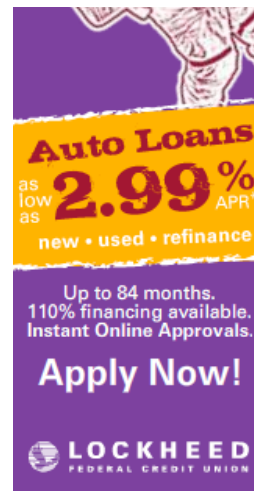
Over the past decade, Burroughs’ Powerhouse and Burbank’s In Sync choirs have both consistently ranked in the top five nationally recognized show choirs and have garnered countless championships, appeared on national television and performed with top celebrities.

Last week’s show, co-hosted by actress Dot-Marie Jones, who plays the role of Coach Beiste on FOX’s “Glee,” and KABC entertainment reporter George Pennacchio, included appearances by special guests including Broadway star Susan Egan and Caroline Sunshine and Kenton Duty, who play Tinka and Gunther on the Disney Channel series “Shake It Up.”

Among the hundreds of dedicated people who made the event a success were members of the foundation’s board and organizing committee that included Kenton Haleem, who serves as the foundation’s executive director, the event’s co-chairs, Kevin McCarney and Craig Murray, and committee members Peggy Flynn, Carrie Brown, Scott Dove, Ross A. Benson, Glenda Jones, Donna Martley, Amy and Rich McGuire, Cyndy Payo, Lisa Reynolds, Eric Simkin, Connie Trimble, Heidi Trotta, Nonna von Sonn, Debbie Wade, Chris Williams, Michelle Williams, Suzanne Weerts, Cynthia Wagner and former Mayor Michael Hastings.

Other contributing notables in attendance included Phil Shearer, Keith Stevens, Kevin Ary, Matt Benson, Glenn Grimm, Jon King, Harrison Lippman, Lisa Martley, Pam Pattera, Shawn Stevens, Jose Vasquez, Vic and Sue Georgino, Joan McCarthy, Ruth Davidson-Guerra, Joe and Sharon Terranova and Burbank Unified Supt. Stan Carrizosa.

Burbank Arts for All’s mission is to ensure every student in Burbank public schools has access to a quality visual and performing arts education. As of 2010, the foundation has awarded more than \$100,000 to local schools and allocates 50% of its annual net income to an endowment fund that will provide a sustainable financing source for arts education in perpetuity.



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