

Top Hatters Motorcycle Club delivers backpacks, food to Niland, Calipatria schools

By DAVID STEFFEN, Staff Writer

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Thursday, November 12, 2009 11:37 PM PST

Members of the Imperial Valley Top Hatters Motorcycle Club filled a pickup bed with neatly lined rows of backpacks containing food for local students in need.

Volunteers headed to Calipatria's Fremont Primary School and Niland's Grace Smith Elementary School on Thursday to kick off a backpack food program for kids.

"There's a lot of hardship going on out there," said Christopher Hawkins, associate for public relations for the Top Hatters Motorcycle Club Imperial Valley Chapter.

He said those with the means don't have to worry about food but it is a concern for many area residents.

"When we're hungry, we just buy something," Hawkins said. "Some of these families are hungry over the weekends."

Eight Top Hatters Motorcycle Club members and friends gathered at Chapter President Armando Lopez's Imperial home to pack 36 backpacks with healthy meals.

Anonymous student recipients — determined by the schools — will receive backpacks with food, like beef ravioli, peaches, cereal and other foods. The menu will rotate each delivery.

Eighteen students in Calipatria and 18 more in Niland will benefit from the food, which they will receive every two weeks for the rest of the school year.

Hawkins, a county school psychologist, said he knows the hardships some students and families endure.

The event was made possible by grants from the Imperial Valley Food Bank. The Top Hatters Motorcycle Club Imperial Valley Chapter will pack and deliver the backpacks every other week.

Lopez said it was great to help out local youths in need.

"It feels great to do it for the kids," he said. "The kids are our future."

Hawkins said the backpack food program will become an annual mainstay.

Tommy Gun, vice president of the Top Hatters Motorcycle Club Imperial Valley Chapter, said he felt it was a duty to lend a helping hand.

"You have to give back to the community and help those kids out that are less fortunate," he said.

The backpacks of weekend food will help out the kids and their families in the present economic climate, he said.

"Times are rough right now, and anything will help," he said.

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DAVID STEFFEN PHOTO
FROM LEFT: Joe Barraza, Frank Hodson and Tommy Gun pack food into backpacks to be delivered by the Top Hatters Motorcycle Club's Imperial Valley Chapter to needy children in Calipatria and Niland on Thursday.



DAVID STEFFEN PHOTO
A pickup is partially filled with some of the 36 backpacks to be delivered to needy children.

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

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Comments:

risktaker

wrote on Nov 13, 2009 10:26 AM:

" Thank you for your service to the community. I am sure that the children appreciate it gentlemen. "

121088

wrote on Nov 13, 2009 8:14 AM:

" What a great project for these guys to take on. Good to know there are groups out there looking for ways to serve their community. For anyone that wants to be a part of it, there are numerous service clubs available in the valley and all are always looking for new members. Join one and get involved. "

marygb

wrote on Nov 13, 2009 5:44 AM:

" IV Press D. Steffen: I realize you included "your" contact information, thanks for that. But, when covering human interest stories such as this one, it would be helpful for the rest of us, to get the contact information (for example)for this particular group. There may be readers wanting to help/donate, or want to know a little bit more about this awesome group of "ANGELS" providing such random acts of kindness towards children!!

tp://www.thmccv.com/top_hatter_mc_welcome.htm "

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