



Fullerton Elks Lodge #1993

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Making a Big Difference With Just a Little Money

By Bob Rhein



Kids of domestic violence survivors get a day out at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County

Photo by Pat Kelly, WTLC

A \$2,000 “Gratitude Grant” from Fullerton Elks Lodge #1993 has allowed about 20 children from WTLC’s shelter program to experience a summer they will long remember.

The children, ranging in age from 3 to 17, had the opportunity to go on outings to the Discovery Science Center in Santa Ana, the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, the Los Angeles County Zoo and the Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach.

“All of these locations are not only fun, but educational,” said Karen Edmonds, an Elks member who wrote the grant proposal and is the wife of Walt Edmonds, Exalted Ruler of the lodge. “We are trying to make a big difference with just a little money.”

The trips were made possible through a grant earmarked to aid children in need. It was part of the Elks National Foundation (ENF) Community Investment Program that invests in worthy causes in communities throughout the United States.

“ENF wants lodges like ours to get grant funds out into our local community,” Edmonds said. “We are a charitable organization capable of doing great things.”

The day trips were taken in June July and the first part of August. “I sold it to our members, as a way to provide more than just a Sun Day Fun Day,” Edmonds said. “This was a diverse educational experience combining science, history, art and animals. “And besides,” she added, “we thought it would be great for these kids in transition to experience typical summer outings.”

She said that WTLC was mindful of the money and arranged the locations so the money would be spent wisely.

Santiago Vivas, children’s program coordinator at WTLC said he was very grateful for the grant money. “I wanted to pick places where the kids could go and have an interactive experience,” he said. “There is a ton of things to do at the Discover Center,” he said. “The Natural History Museum was incredible; the kids had a blast there,” Vivas said. “All kids like dinosaurs, and the Butterfly Pavilion was a real hit.

He said that the staffs at all of the locations were very friendly. For children who have experienced domestic violence and were now living in a shelter away from all that is familiar to them, the kids were not afraid.

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For more than 50 years, the Fullerton Elks have been providing support to local charities, as well as schools, civic organizations and veterans. The Elks National Foundation's Community Investments Program invests \$8.5 million a year in Elks communities through Lodge grants that help Elks meet local needs. For more information visit: fullertonelkslodge1993.org.

WTLC

WTLC, a registered, non-profit organization in Orange County, is dedicated to helping individuals and families escape the depths of domestic violence and exploitation With Tender Loving Care. For more information, visit WTLC.org.

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