



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS  
OF THE EAST VALLEY**

# The Connection

A Quarterly Publication of the Boys & Girls Clubs of the East Valley

Spring 2008

## **Congratulations to the 2008 Youth of the Year Harmony Nelson of the Grant Woods Branch – Mesa**

Harmony Nelson is a true example of an extraordinary young woman. At age 17, she has been selected as the East Valley Youth of the Year for the Boys & Girls Clubs of the East Valley. The East Valley Youth of the Year Banquet was held the evening of Thursday, March 6, 2008 at Tempe Mission Palm Hotel. Nelson was among nine east valley candidates competing for the Boys & Girls Clubs of the East Valley Youth of the Year title. Nelson was awarded a \$20,000 Educational Fund from The Victoria Lund Foundation. Harmony also received a \$2,000 scholarship through supporters of the Boys & Girls Clubs of the East Valley.

Nelson is a junior at Tempe Preparatory Academy and has been a member of the club for seven years. Harmony competed against other Boys & Girls Club members at the state level during the State Youth of the Year Legislative Breakfast presented by Fiesta Bowl which was held Tuesday, April 22nd at the Hyatt Regency in downtown Phoenix. Nelson was won of the top four finalists. Congratulations Harmony!



The Youth of the Year program would not have been possible without the support from...

Hoag Family Trust | The Victoria Lund Foundation



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(Front, from left) Youth of the Year Candidates: Marina Urbina, Compadre Branch - Chandler; Ravy Neth, Ladmo Branch- Tempe Branch; Danielle Corrales, Thunderbirds Branch- Guadalupe; Victoria Graff, Gilbert Branch. (Back, from left) Francisco Thomas, Gila River Branch- Komatke; Samantha Johnson, Gila River Branch- Sacaton; Christina Crews, Williams Campus Branch; Harmony Nelson, Grant Woods Branch- Mesa and Kody Roberts, Apache Junction Branch.

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## A Message from President/CEO Ramon Elias

Greeting Friends,

We at the Boys & Girls Clubs of the East Valley hope that 2008 has been good to you so far. It's hard to believe it's already the month of May! In the last several months the youth at the Clubs have been keeping very busy. We've opened up two new satellite branches in both Chandler and Guadalupe public housing and we're ready to break ground in Komatke for a new, beautiful facility. One of our greatest events, and my personal favorite, was held in early March. The 2008 Youth of the Year Banquet was a wonderful night for our staff and volunteers. We had nine candidates from our branches compete for the title. Let me tell you, the process leading up to this event is no easy task. These teenagers went through a vigorous application process, learned how to public speak thanks to Toastmasters, went before a panel of judges and learned the importance of etiquette. I want to congratulate each and every one of them for making the Boys & Girls Clubs of the East Valley very proud. I want to especially congratulate Harmony Nelson of the Grant Woods Branch- Mesa for a job well done. Harmony competed at the state level and was one of the top four finalists. Harmony is an amazing young lady and her story of compassion for others and her commitment to our community inspires me. I'm also excited to announce our partnership with the WellCare Foundation. They have opened up a clinic in our Gilbert Branch for single, working mothers who can't afford healthcare for their families. A WellCare clinic is also open in our Ladmo Branch – Tempe and someday I hope each and every one of our branches will have a WellCare clinic. I would also like to mention that our Mesa Arts Academy's administration office suffered fire damage during Spring Break. Fortunately, the building was empty and all student records are safe and we are rebuilding the office. The team at Mesa Arts Academy is a family and will get through this thanks to your support. Finally, thank you to everyone who supported Bon Vivant. We raised more than \$220,000 with another \$70,000 in in-kind donations. This year's Bon Vivant was the largest ever and I look forward to seeing all of you at Bon Vivant in 2009. I wish everyone a wonderful summer and remember our clubs are open all summer for Summer Day Camp. These camps are absolutely the best way for a child to spend the summer. And as always, we invite you to visit one of our branches to see the difference you make to our organization every day.



President/CEO Ramon Elias with 2008 Youth of the Year Harmony Nelson

*Ramon Elias*



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### OUR MISSION

We are a community-based, character building youth development organization. We deliver the highest quality programs and provide opportunities to assist youth and teens in developing their self-esteem, values and skills in a fun and safe environment. Our professionals guide members through personal, educational and social development, to realize their full potential and become positive, value-oriented and productive citizens.

### OUR VISION

Be the premier provider of youth services reaching all youth and teens in the communities we serve.

## Proving the Power of a Penny

*Teens Raise Money for a Good Cause*

On Friday, April 4th teen members from all over the East Valley came together for A Night in Neon. The dance event was funded by a Taco Bell grant. The mission of the Taco Bell grant was for teen members to have a good time, but somehow incorporate giving back to their community. The teens decided on a four-week long "Power of a Penny" campaign in collaboration with Power 98.3. Every Club was asked to raise as many pennies as possible for the family of Scott Detherage, a former Boys & Girls Clubs of the East Valley employee and a mentor to many teenagers in the Chandler housing community. Scott recently died from a long battle with a terminal disease. The Clubs raised more than \$1,260 with the help of some on-air mentions by Power 98.3's "The Nutz" morning crew, commercials put together by the Boys & Girls Clubs of the East Valley staff and an interview with Karlie Hustle and some of our Youth of the Year candidates. Taco Bell donated another \$1,000 to Scott's family allowing the Clubs to present Scott's family with a check for \$2,260. Thank you Taco Bell! And good job teens!



Youth of the Year finalist are interviewed by Power 98.3's Karlie Hustle on the importance of Power of a Penny.



Teen members dance the night away at the "Night in Neon" Event

## Insight Bowl



Tyshon Norris, 6 from the Gila River Branch – Sacaton gets an autograph from a couple of Oklahoma State football players.

## WellCare Ribbon-Cutting



Thanks to the Victoria Lund Foundation, a WellCare Clinic opened its doors in our Gilbert Branch. The clinic is available to working, single mothers who cannot afford healthcare. For more information visit [www.wellcarefoundation.org](http://www.wellcarefoundation.org)

## Club Kids Star in Major League Baseball Commercial



Members from our Gilbert and Compadre- Chandler clubs were asked to star in commercials that will air throughout the entire 2008 MLB season. The kids got to meet Dan Haren of the Arizona Diamondbacks and Prince Fielder of the Milwaukee Brewers. The commercials were shot during spring training and can be seen on all games airing on ESPN, FOX, TBS or any other game airing on National television. The kids did a great job!

## IN THE SPOTLIGHT!



Fox 10's Jayme King with De Ja Vue of the Gilbert Branch & Teen Center during a live taping of Fox 10 Arizona Morning featuring our winter camp.

## SOME OF OUR SUPPORTERS...



The Allred Charitable Fund donated \$25,000 to the Boys & Girls Clubs of the East Valley's Compadre- Chandler Branch. The check was presented during a ground breaking ceremony of the Allred Park Place near Pecos & Ellis Roads. We appreciate your support!



Tempe Diablos donated \$70,000 to the Ladmo Branch and North Tempe Branches during a California Angels Spring Training game. Thanks Tempe Diablos!

Visit Our Website:

[www.clubzona.org](http://www.clubzona.org)

# Bon Vivant ~ A Celebration of Fine Food & Drink A Fine Success!

The 23rd Annual M&I Bank Bon Vivant ~ A Celebration of Fine Food & Drink brought in more than \$220,000 on the evening of Sunday, March 30, 2008 at Rawhide at Wild Horse Pass. "This is



a great networking opportunity for everyone involved," said Boys & Girls Clubs of the East Valley President/CEO Ramon Elias. "We had more than 3,500 people attend Bon Vivant. Thanks to Bashas' more than 900 different wines, beers, liquors and non-alcoholic beverages were showcased not to mention delicious food from about 30 restaurants."

Bon Vivant was presented by D.R. Horton Homes, LifeLock, Michael A. Pollack Real Estate Investments and the Chandler

Compadres. Other major sponsors of the event include US Airways, The Arizona Republic, KOOL FM and Rawhide. Restaurants included Food City, AJ's, the Landmark Restaurant and Chocolates by Bernard Callebaut in the Vip Area. Restaurants and caterers participating in the main event included Almond Brothers, BJ's Restaurant & Brewery, Dilly's Deli, Elephant Bar, Famous Dave's, Kokopelli Winery & Bistro, Macayo's, Native New Yorker, Papa Razzini's Italian Eatery, Someburros, RA Sushi, Rawhide Western Town & Steakhouse, Rosita's Fine Mexican Food, Salerno's, Sunflower Farmers Markets, Urban Tea Loft, Victoria's Catering, Wind Dance at Gila River Casinos, Whiskey Ranch BBQ, Breadsmith Bakery and Whirlwind Golf Club's Sivlik Grill. "We are so lucky to have such great supporters," said Bon Vivant Chairman and Mesa resident Steve Raether. "We can't thank everyone enough including the sponsors, volunteers and staff who put in hundreds of hours to raise nearly a quarter of a million dollars for the kids."

As part of Bon Vivant, all chefs were challenged to a friendly culinary contest. The Fare Extraordinaire Best Entrée went to Tempe-based Papa Razzini's Italian Eatery, which is the longest participating Bon Vivant restaurant. Best Presentation went to Food City, Best Appetizer went to Dilly's Deli, Best Salad went to Rawhide Steakhouse and Best Dessert went to Native New Yorker. Entertainment was provided by Michael A. Pollack's Corporate Affair, Vintage and New Orleans Spicey Chops. For information on how you can get involved with Bon Vivant 2009, contact Cindy Slette (cindy@clubzona.org) at 480.820.3688. Thank you for making Bon Vivant a success!

## Thanks to the following sponsors...



Aldo Razzini of Papa Razzini's Italian Eatery poses for a photo at his booth. Papa Razzini's won best entrée. The restaurant is also the longest running Bon Vivant participant, nine years strong!



Entertainment inside the Bon Vivant tent was provided by Michael A. Pollack's Corporate Affair.



Bon Vivant Chairperson Steve Raether and President/CEO Ramon Elias present an award to Carey Allen of M&I Bank. M&I Bank was the title sponsor of Bon Vivant for the third year in a row



VIP Guests Monica Munoz & enjoy some of the wine samples at Bon Vivant



Peggy Hoag and Lana Hock bid on items in the Silent Auction Area

Would you like to be on our e-mail list and know more about Bon Vivant and other programs? Email [info@clubzona.org](mailto:info@clubzona.org) and we'll make sure you get the latest information on our special events!

## Boys & Girls Clubs of the East Valley Opens Two New Satellite Branches

Clubs open in Chandler & Guadalupe Public Housing



(From left) Ruben Cabral & Oscar Roman enjoy the new arts & games room at the Father Kuban Branch.



Alphonso Patrick, Housing Authority of Maricopa County Executive Director and President/CEO Ramon Elias welcome kids to the new Father Kuban Branch in Guadalupe.

Boys & Girls Clubs of the East Valley has opened two new satellite branches in Guadalupe and Chandler. The Father Fidelis Kuban Branch-Guadalupe officially opened its doors to children ages 6-18 on Wednesday, April 2nd. The Boys & Girls Clubs of the East Valley has teamed up with Housing Authority of Maricopa County to offer free memberships to the members of the Father Fidelis Kuban Satellite Branch. "We are excited about this partnership," said Ramon Elias, president/CEO of the Boys & Girls Clubs of the East Valley. The community center will be able to serve an additional 100 kids and teens at no cost to the child's family. The second satellite branch is the Palm Lane Branch- Chandler located in Chandler Housing. The new branch celebrated its grand opening on Tuesday, April 22nd with free food and a bouncy house.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Summer Day Camp Begins

Tues, May 27

Bashas' & Food City PB&J Drive Benefiting Boys & Girls Clubs

(Donate money, peanut butter or jelly at any Valley Bashas' or Food City location.)

June 15 - July 15

ChildSpree

Saturday, July 19

Day for Kids

Saturday, September 20

## Congratulations to Tempe & Chandler



America's Promise Alliance awarded Tempe and Chandler as two of the 100 Best Communities three times in a row!



LifeLock CEO Todd Davis and members of the North Tempe Branch and Ladmo Branch- Tempe during Bids for Kids.

## LifeLock Offers the Nation's First Children's Identity Theft Protection Program.

Did you know that an identity is stolen every three seconds? But it's just not adults who have to deal with identity theft, children are victims too! Since January, 2008- in just 4 months- there has been over 100 breaches from schools and universities, affecting more than 1,000,000 people. In just the last year, 32% of identity theft cases affected those between ages one and 29 years old. Tempe-based LifeLock is committed to the safety of children and has been a strong supporter of the Boys & Girls Club movement. Now, LifeLock is proud to offer Boys & Girls Clubs of the East Valley families, staff and supporters 10% off enrollment and 30 days free. Kids enroll free with adult enrollment. Just use promotional code BGC. For more information visit, [www.lifelock.com](http://www.lifelock.com) or call 1-800-LIFELOCK

Why I ❤️ the Boys & Girls Clubs of the East Valley...



Alan Thompson, Age 7

"I like the staff & field trips because they are both fun!"

## Williams Campus Branch Members Visit ASU

Girl Scout Troop 995 Earns Music Badges



From left, Brianna Cavello, Baily Rojas & Danielle Abercrombie enjoy a musical day at ASU.

Ten girls from the Williams Campus Branch attended Girl Scout Music Day at ASU in mid January. 200 Girl Scouts attended this event sponsored by a Music Sorority and Fraternity. The college students provided programs on music around the world, the Music Zoo where the girls actually played instruments, music singing and reading, making an instrument and marching. The girls also tried on marching band uniforms from west coast universities including Cal Poly. The Girls Scout members earned a few badges including badges for Making Music, the Sound of Music Try-Its and Making Music Junior Badge.

# Sign up for Summer Day Camp today!



11 branches in the East Valley serving your community

- Apache Junction
- Compadre Branch - Chandler
- Gila River Branch - Sacaton
- Gila River Branch - Komatke
- Gilbert Branch
- Thunderbirds Branch - Guadalupe
- Grant Woods Branch - Mesa
- Ladmo Branch - Tempe
- Queen Creek Branch
- Williams Campus Branch
- North Tempe Branch



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To register, call **480.345.CLUB (2582)**  
or visit **www.clubzona.org** \*serving youth ages 6-18

*The Positive Place For Kids*

**Boys & Girls Clubs of the East Valley**  
Programs Service Center  
1405 East Guadalupe Road, Suite 4  
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## QUICK PIC!



North Tempe Club member Diana Guerrero with American Gladiator and celebrity Laila Ali at a Super Bowl event in February.

