

A mock Las Vegas casino will set the scene for a poker tournament fundraiser to benefit the Boys & Girls Club of Simi Valley on Jan. 25 at Lost Canyons Golf Course.

In addition to raising money for Boys & Girls Club programs, the tournament will give players a chance to win a seat at a world series of poker events in Las Vegas, said Virginia Hayward, CEO of the Boys & Girls Club of Simi Valley. The event has also added dancing and entertainment, with a special guest appearance by "Frank Sinatra."

Items up for bid in a silent auction will include a flat-screen TV, iPod, Steve Garvey baseball and Dwight Howard jersey, Hayward said.

Event organizers hope to raise at least \$30,000.

"Without the support we would not be able to provide positive life changing programs to the 10,000 children we serve in the community," Hayward said.

The club will use the proceeds to expand programs, especially teen outreach, to motivate older youths to be the best they can, Hayward said.

"Most people in our community do not know that 97 percent of club members graduate from high school, or that for every \$1 invested in the club, \$12 is reinvested in the community," Hayward said.

The club relies on the community and fundraisers like the poker tournament for a major part of its funding, said Shari Schultz, a member of the club's board of directors. It gets no funding or support from government entities.

The Boys & Girls Club is significant because it offers a safe environment for children after

Written by Administrator

Monday, 21 January 2013 03:50 -

school and during the winter and summer breaks, Schultz said.

"This is more than just a baby-sitting location. We offer various programs, tutoring, computer access, classes, consulting, supervision to hundreds of kids on a daily basis, and at a very reasonable rate," Schultz said. "But this rate is not self-supporting, which is why we need everyone's help to support the club and help with the fundraising events."

The children in the programs "are not just the underprivileged or low-income families who attend," Schultz said. "They are also the kids of your average white-collar family from Simi who see the benefits of the programs being offered to their kids and a secure place for them to go after school."

Without support from the community, the Boys & Girls Club would not exist, said Deb Holler, a member of the club's board of directors.

"When a community member attends a fundraiser or donates to the club, it makes it possible to keep these much needed programs going," Holler said.

If you go

What: Casino Night and Texas Hold 'em Poker Tournament

When: Jan. 25; registration opens at 5:30 p.m.

Where: Lost Canyons Golf Course, 3301 Lost Canyons Drive, Simi Valley

Cost: \$120 for poker tournament; \$50 for casino gaming

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