

A look back at Kids Day 2015: from celebrity corner to students in Oakhurst

Kids Day sales were brisk Tuesday morning at "celebrity corner," Blackstone and Shaw avenues in Fresno. THEFRESNOBEE

Valley Children's Hospital received a boost from hundreds of Kids Day volunteers — including politicians, athletes and young people "paying it forward" — who lined streets around the central San Joaquin Valley on Tuesday to sell special editions of The Bee as donations for the hospital.

A who's who of Fresno — including Mayor Ashley Swearingin, Police Chief Jerry Dyer, Fresno County Sheriff Margaret Mims and Fresno State coaches Tim DeRuyter and Rodney Terry — turned out early Tuesday to sell papers at "celebrity corner" at Blackstone and Shaw avenues.

Mims sold three papers within minutes of arriving. "A lot of excitement and energy here," she said. It didn't hurt that the Bullard High School drum line was at the corner, too. Fresno State men's and women's rugby players joined in at the spot, and wound up selling 1,285 copies for \$1 each.

Kids Day donations are still being counted, but around \$340,500 had been raised for Valley Children's Hospital as of 5 p.m. Tuesday, said hospital spokesperson Zara Arboleda. She believes this year's goal of raising \$530,000 will be reached.

That'll push the total raised in 28 years of the annual event, a joint effort of The Bee and ABC30, past \$7 million.

Sales were brisk at Blackstone and Nees avenues, where Mackenzie Cooks and a team from Hooters restaurant reported selling more than 400 papers by 8 a.m. after starting their day at 4 a.m.

Members of the Fresno Monsters hockey team staked out Shaw and Cedar avenues, where Austin Browning used his hockey skills to blade skate up to cars stopped at the intersection to deliver papers to customers.

In Oakhurst, nearly two dozen California Scholarship Federation club members at Yosemite High School raised about \$2,300 — work rewarded with two free extra-large pizzas for lunch from Pizza Factory.

The volunteer effort was personal for 17-year-old Jessica Tanoury. The Yosemite High senior coordinated the school's Kids Day volunteers as her senior project. It was meant as a "thank you" to Valley Children's Hospital staff, who discovered her 14-year-old brother had four knee caps — a rare condition they addressed by removing two of the knee caps during surgery three weeks ago. She said her brother is now "fully mobile" and able to walk without pain. The hospital's physical therapists also treated her tendinitis.

Tanoury and a half dozen of the students sold papers from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., said CSF club adviser and Spanish teacher Rebecca Brokaw.

"The kids were overwhelmed by the generosity that they received all day," Brokaw said. "The kids all left saying, 'We want to do this again and again.'"

In Visalia, students from Mount Whitney High School were selling by 5 a.m. "It's cool waking up in the morning and seeing all the people who want to support the community," said Tyler Kennedy, 16, a sophomore, who worked the busy corner of Mooney Boulevard and Noble Avenue.

Juliana Warren, 16, a sophomore, said she was selling papers as an activity in her medical careers school club.

“Some people are very generous,” she said. “They give more than \$1 and don’t ask for any change back.”

Marshall McDowell, director of audience development at The Bee, said \$514,152 was raised during last year’s Kids Day. “We continue to break the record each year, so the goal continues to go higher each year,” McDowell said.

Arboleda said Kids Day donations are also being accepted through March 9 by texting the word GEORGE to 90999 which automatically provides a \$5 donation to the hospital.

The Bee’s Jim Guy, Lewis Griswold and Carmen George contributed to this report. Contact Jim Guy: jguy@fresnobee.com, (559) 441-6339 or [@jimguy27](https://twitter.com/jimguy27) on Twitter. Contact Lewis Griswold: lgriswold@fresnobee.com, (559) 441-6104 or [@fb_LewGriswold](https://twitter.com/fb_LewGriswold) on Twitter. Contact Carmen George: cgeorge@fresnobee.com, (559) 441-6386 or [@CarmenGeorge](https://twitter.com/CarmenGeorge) on Twitter.