

Dollars for Dogs fundraiser supports SB Police K9 Unit

Contributed by Ricardo Tombo

On Monday April 29th, the Mexico Cafe held its 9th annual Dollar-For-Dogs fundraising event that helps support the San Bernardino Police Department's K-9 unit. All throughout the day Police Officers, Police Reserve Officers, and Police staff support personnel worked side by side with the wait staff at the Mexico Cafe serving customers. Police dogs and their handlers greeted patrons at the entrance of the restaurant, posing for pictures. David Earhart Photography provided a staff photographer who was printing out 5X7 photographs on site, as the customers waited.

Yes, the Cops made sure you never ran out of salsa and chips, drinks and ice. This was a Tip-A-Cop event that was able to raise over \$30,000 for the K-9 Unit, doubling last year's contributions. During a Tip-A-Cop function, the wait staff keeps their portion of the tips they earned from the customers. Envelopes were placed on each table for the patrons who wanted to support the fundraiser.

The money collected in these envelopes were designated to Dollars-For-Dogs.

The K-9 Unit is self supported and relies on the contributions from outside the City's general fund and Police Department's budget to maintain the program.

Employees from the Animal Control unit and Code Enforcement unit were there to support the program. Citizens Patrol Volunteers and Explorer Scouts also came out to support the cause. Forensic Specialist Christian Sanchez took time before her shift started to pitch in a few hours. One retired Forensic took mug shots and photographs at the tables, serenading them afterwards with guitar and song!

The restaurant was filled to capacity as a long waiting line formed outside. Several local agencies came to support the fundraiser and enjoyed the festive crowds. School Police, Fire Department, City Attorney's Office, Mayor's Office, a Police Commissioner, and many others all came to be part of the event. But, it was the local citizens of this community that gave its greatest support, that enabled the Dollars-For-Dogs to double their projected goals!



IECN PHOTO RICARDO TOMBOC

Gemma Greene from Rialto (left back seat), came from an invitation she received from her photography instructor. In turn, Gemma, being an animal lover and supporter of the K-9's, she invited three of her friends, Donna Lockhart from Pinon Hills (left front seat), Sonia Nichols from San Bernardino (right back seat), and Gemma's sister Marian Kirtley from Pinon Hills.



IECN PHOTO RICARDO TOMBOC

As the crowds waited for a table, K-9's and their handlers were able to meet and greet, and pose for photographs.



IECN PHOTO RICARDO TOMBOC

American Red Cross Disaster Workers John and Francisca Hillman came by to deliver their contribution during the 9th Annual Dollar for Dogs event at the Mexico Cafe in San Bernardino and ended up decorated in yellow police crime scene tape.



IECN PHOTO RICARDO TOMBOC

K-9 Officer Vix and his handler Officer Garrett Prinz stand by the entry door of the Mexico Cafe waiting to greet customers as they come in the door.

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