

## Tribe contributes \$1.5 million to 'change lives'

**DONATION: The Pechanga gift to the Boys and Girls Clubs is enough to build a complex near Redhawk.**

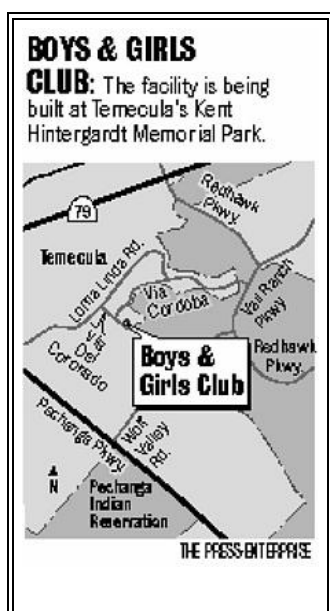
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By **TIM O'LEARY / The Press-Enterprise**

TEMECULA - A \$1.5 million contribution -- the largest community donation made by the Pechanga tribe -- was awarded Thursday to the Boys and Girls Clubs of Southwest County.

The donation, which is almost as large as the organization's \$1.7 million annual operations budget, is enough to build a youth complex now under construction near Redhawk. It also can underwrite much of the cost to build a center proposed on eight acres in French Valley.

"This is a gift that will change lives and save lives of the children of this valley," said Terry Gilmore, a Temecula car dealer and director of the nonprofit organization that provides services to more than 3,300 annually in the Temecula, Murrieta, French Valley and Lake Elsinore areas.



The donation was by far the largest ever received by the organization, said club president Michelle Arellano.

Temecula City Councilman Mike Naggar, education and business leader Joan Sparkman and four members of the Pechanga Development Corp, joined Gilmore and Arellano in accepting the gift.

Pechanga leaders Patrick Murphy Jr. and Anthony Miranda reflected on the tribe's long history in the Temecula Valley and its service to area youth through sports, school and child care programs.

About 45 people attended the brief gathering in which a ceremonial check was passed and talk turned to raising children at a time when parents are harried by commuting and other day-to-day pressures. Such youth clubs provide a key service for parents who must work distant jobs while

their children celebrate summer vacation or days off from school, they said.

"It is really a necessity, not a luxury," Naggar said.

The gathering prefaced the 13th annual Boys and Girls Club auction and dinner, which is planned for Saturday night at the Pechanga Resort & Casino. The 5 p.m. event is expected to attract up to 1,500 guests.

The tribe has given to numerous local nonprofit, school and community groups since it began operating a casino south of Temecula in July 1995.

The tribal officials and community leaders gathered at the site of a 5,520-square-foot club facility -- the second to be built in Temecula -- in the nine-acre Kent Hintergardt Memorial Park, which is wedged between the Redhawk and Wolf Creek subdivisions.

*The \$850,000 center -- to be known as the Pechanga Great Oak Boy and Girls Club at Kent Hintergardt Memorial Park -- is expected to open in April. Reach Tim O'Leary at (951) 375-3733 or [toleary@pe.com](mailto:toleary@pe.com)*