

## Chino Champion (CA)

### Lemonade stands slake foundation's thirsty coffers

Marianne Napoles

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The weather was right for thirsty shoppers who took a swig of lemonade last Saturday and dropped their dollars into a jar for a worthy cause. Lots of dollars. More than \$7,600 was raised by 225 youth who organized and operated 18 lemonade stands across the Chino Valley for The **Let It Be Foundation**.

Proceeds from the fourth annual event will provide room makeovers for children suffering from life-threatening illnesses.

Last year, the event raised \$6,400.

Chino resident Vanessa Mabini stopped by the lemonade stand to pick up a brochure and give her 2 ½-year-old daughter, Sophia Mabini, a cold drink before entering the Vons grocery store in Chino Hills.

Volunteer Devin Barbin, 11, explained to Ms. Mabini why **it** was so important to give to the charity.

Jared Weissman, 15, took a more direct approach. "Please, the children need you," he pleaded to customers walking into the store.

Jared knows the need first-hand.

He was one of the children helped by The **Let It Be Foundation** while undergoing treatment for Hodgkin's Lymphoma. He has been in remission for one year.

"I'm here because I want to give back," he said. "I saw what the **foundation** did and I liked **it**."

Jared, who will attend Ayala High School in the fall as a sophomore, is a member of The **Let It Be Foundation** Junior Advisory Team, the group that organized the lemonade stands along with the Junior Link Team.

Also serving lemonade was 10-year-old Tommy Connole, a fifth grader at Wickman Elementary School in Chino Hills. Tommy was diagnosed in December with Burkitt's Lymphoma, which is in his bone. Despite his adversities Tommy said he felt good because he was giving back to the **foundation**.

"The **foundation** gave me autographs from baseball players and they gave my pet a bath," he said.

He didn't forget to mention the grocery cards and gift cards.

His mother, Joy Connole, wiped away tears as she sat on a nearby bench and talked about her hopes and fears. She watched her son interact with the public, proudly describing how he looked so much like her husband.

The diagnosis has taken a toll on her family life, she said, but the **foundation** is providing as much normalcy as possible for all three of her children.

"I can't say enough about the **foundation**," she said. "In addition to the material support, they are giving us emotional support that is unreal."

Information: The **Let It Be Foundation**: 613-9161, or [theletitbefoundation.com](http://theletitbefoundation.com).

Champion photos by Marianne Napoles Devin Barbin, 11, (showing brochure at right) explains the goals of The **Let It Be Foundation** to Chino resident Vanessa Mabini, holding lemonade, while her 2 ½-year-old daughter, Sophia Mabini, waits in cart. Standing from left are Danielle Weinstein, 19, and Samantha Weinstein, 14. Not seen in photo but at the table is 10-year-old Sydney Taylor.

RIGHT: Chino Hills resident Tommy Connole, 10, (forefront) serves lemonade to customers at Vons grocery store in Chino Hills.

He is joined by Jared Weissman, 15.

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