

## **Love of the earth**

Teens remake lawns to aid families of ill children

A tree has been planted for Sara Polito (wearing hat) by members of the Junior Advisory Team of The Let It Be Foundation. With Sara are Sara Montoya (left), Matthew Greathouse, Brianna Perez and Jake Muth. The group helped six families on Sept. 24 with front yard make-overs. Shown is the Polito home.

Twenty teenagers rolled up their sleeves on Sept. 24 to spruce up the front yards of families who are struggling to care for children with life-threatening diseases.

Members of the Junior Advisory Team for The Let It Be Foundation joined 35 department heads from Home Depot stores in Chino and Rancho Cucamonga to provide yard makeovers for six families who are under the care of the Foundation.

At the Chino home of Sara Polito, a 13-year-old battling non-Hodgkins lymphoma, the prospect of a new front yard was exciting.

The family had intended to improve the yard for some time, but the project got pushed to the side when Sara, a Don Lugo High School fresh-man, was diagnosed with cancer last spring. She has been tutored at home ever since.

Sara said she is looking forward to the addition of an herb garden to tend with her grandmother. "We're in and out of here so often, heading to the hospital, and we always say that this house really has no curb appeal," said Sara's step-mom, Gena Polito. "We just feel real-ly grateful to have this kind of support from the community."

A tree was planted in the front of each home, to remind the families that the community supports them, said Ruthe Rosen, who founded Let It Be in 2006 with her husband, Michael, after their 15-year-old daughter, Karla, died of a brain tumor. "When you're caring for an ill child, you're not thinking about the weeds growing out front, or that you need to trim a tree," Mrs. Rosen said.

The organization provides support and assistance to families in the Chino Valley who are caring for children diagnosed with life-threatening illnesses.

Home Depot donated thousands of dollars in materials and labor including sprinkler systems, sod, paving stones, paint, shrubs, trees, and flowers, said Joe Garcia, manager of the Chino store. Mr. Garcia said he hopes the project represents the beginning of a great relationship with the foundation. Information on The Let It Be Foundation: 613-9161.