



Summer 2016

BOYS REPUBLIC Report

“Voice of the Dodgers” Vin Scully is 2016 Della Robbia Wreath Chairman

Della Robbia
Wreath
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Legendary sports broadcaster Vin Scully serves as this year’s Honorary National Chairman of the Della Robbia wreath campaign. In this role, Mr. Scully will appear in literature promoting Boys Republic’s handmade holiday wreaths.

Famous for his vivid yet straightforward descriptions of a baseball game, Mr. Scully has announced Los Angeles Dodgers games for an unprecedented 67 seasons. Mr. Scully began broadcasting for the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1950. When the team relocated to Los Angeles in 1957, so did Mr. Scully. The 2016 baseball season marks the announcer’s final year with the team.

Mr. Scully’s illustrious career is studded with many achievements. The beloved broadcaster was inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1982 and the American Sportscasters Association’s Hall of Fame in 1992. Widely regarded as the finest sportscaster of all time, Mr. Scully was named the poet laureate of baseball by USA Today and the best of the century in Los Angeles broadcasting by the Long Beach Press-Telegram.



Vin Scully

By the Numbers: *Boys Republic’s* *3 Millionth Wreath*

Each wreath that passes through the hands of students in the assembly line is decorated and gently tucked into a shipping box. The evergreen boughs, specially handled by Boys Republic students, in turn touch each teenager with the experience of earning his own way through honest work.

Students and the staff who supervise them fashion and ship Della Robbia Christmas wreaths every holiday season. This year,

the three millionth Della Robbia wreath will be hand-assembled by students since the program’s inception.

The enduring work experience program began as a simple craft project. Boys Republic founder Margaret Fowler first taught wreath-making to the children in her care in 1923. That Christmas,

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Three Millionth Wreath

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students made a couple dozen wreaths and, with the help of the Pasadena Auxiliary, sold them door to door in the community for \$2.50 each.

So successful was the project that the next year students made 107 wreaths. Wreath sales grew to 500 boughs the following season, then 1,000, then 1,500. In the early 1950s, Boys Republic's Board of Directors formalized Della Robbia wreath-making into a warehouse work experience program.

Teenagers today assemble an average of 40,000 Della Robbias every Christmas season. The three millionth wreath symbolizes ninety-three years of student growth and recovery through the vocational program. To commemorate this milestone, the California State Senate will recognize the Della Robbia wreath campaign and the thousands of students touched by the work experience program on the Senate floor in August.



HOLIDAY WORK: Students tuck handmade wreaths into boxes during wreath production. On average, teens assemble 40,000 wreaths every holiday season.



Adela Corral

Long-Time Della Robbia Wreath Employee Retires

Adela Corral made her first Della Robbia wreath when she was just 15. She worked in Boys Republic's pod barn two years later, but Adela wouldn't return to the campus for another nineteen years.

When she did, Adela became a full-time, welcome presence in the pod barn. Beginning in 1980, Adela assembled the natural decorations students use to adorn the festive wreaths. Adela was later promoted to Assistant Supervisor since, as her supervisor John Lemeiux affirms, she is "the perfect employee and always helpful and eager to make things work." As Assistant Supervisor, Adela ensured workers had enough materials, checked the quality of each wreath, and fixed any loose decorations.

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At a recent campus-wide graduation ceremony, student Lowell Nichols received the “Blue Book,” the school’s highest award for program completion. Unlike conventional high schools where the standard for graduation is centered primarily on academic attainment, Boys Republic’s standard embraces good citizenship. Honesty, diligence, accountability, courage and respect for others are among our most treasured values. Unswervingly, Lowell took them to heart and encouraged us all to do the same. His Blue Book graduation speech is below.

Make A Choice!

“I’d like to truly thank Brewer Cottage for the honor of receiving this Blue Book. I’d like to personally thank Mama Mary, Steve, G, Danny, Marcus, Maricela and every student that has been part of my journey and has allowed me to be part of theirs.

We all make choices, but in the end our choices make us. We are our choices. I’m a result of my choices; I’m a result of a broken home with no father in my life. I’m also a product of fear: fear of the unknown, the fear of not knowing how to make better choices and the fear, up until now, was stronger than my courage. I’m also blind; blinded by the streets, blinded by the negative people I’ve surrounded myself with, blinded so much that, until now, I didn’t see the opportunities in front of me. This Blue Book has given me the distinct opportunity to speak in front of you and with this opportunity I’m here to share one main message: make a choice!

I come from a broken home, no father in my life, just me and my siblings. I often sat there and thought where am I headed and how do I start that journey? Many of you sitting right there have lived your life with no father and no role model to show you how to be a good young man. No father to show us how to earn instead of take or how to treat a lady with respect and many other character building lessons. Many of you will father a child at a young age and will have to make a choice. Make a choice to create the same cycle you are a product of or break the cycle and be a father no matter the circumstances of the relationship. Make a choice to continue a life of crime and spend your life institutionalized thus not being able to be a father or make the choice to break the cycle.

Secondly, courage is not living fearless. Courage is being scared to death but to do what is right despite the fear. Many of you sitting here come from rough areas but live in fear. Fear of what to do and how to do it. It’s much easier to sit in a crowd but it takes courage to stand alone.



Lowell Nichols

Our fears keep us from exploring what’s in front of us or our potential to be significant young men of society. Our fear cripples us to continue taking the same path and making the same poor choices while creating the same results. So this Blue Book is allowing me the opportunity to tell you not to be afraid to choose the right path but you . . . have to

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Masonry Competition Builds Student Confidence

Neat structures of block and mortar stand firm as the judges measure and jot down the results on their clipboards. While the adults closely observe each long wall, straight lead, and sample panel, Boys Republic Masonry student Jahsi eagerly awaits the results. As one of the six Boys Republic students competing, he wants to win because he and his classmates can use one of the prizes: new tools.

Jahsi and his partner Emilio earned second place for their eight-foot long wall at the Masonry Industry Training Association's "Top Notch Trowel" competition. The annual event, held May 7 at Boys Republic, brought together masonry students from several high schools to compete.

The young masons had an hour and a half to build either a long wall, straight lead, sample panel, or corner lead. Assisted by a student "tender" who supplied materials and mortar to his peers, Boys Republic students quickly built, measured, and leveled their structures. Their completed structures were judged by industry professionals based on accuracy, cleanliness, and completion.

Of the five events, Boys Republic students placed third in the straight lead, third in the sample panel, third in the corner lead, and second in the long wall. The boys, all of whom have taken Masonry for two to nine weeks, did well considering their competition had trained for closer to a year. Boys Republic Masonry instructor Steve Perez says that although his students were at a disadvantage, they all tried their best during the competition.

To prepare his students for the event, Mr. Perez taught them how to build each masonry structure carefully and correctly. Then Mr. Perez timed the students as they constructed each long wall, panel, and corner lead. One-on-one instruction, mock competitions, and the actual event laid the



BUILDING TOGETHER: Jahsi and Emilio measure the dimensions of their long wall at the Top Notch Trowel competition. The two Boys Republic Masonry students earned second place for their structure.

foundations for the students' competitive masonry skills.

The competition was a new experience for many of the Boys Republic students. Since the majority of them have never participated in an organized sport or a competition, Mr. Perez explains, the event "exposes the boys to something positive and makes them feel proud they accomplished something." In fact, one of Mr. Perez's students was so proud of his third place medal he wore it around his neck for a whole week.

The pride the young masons take from competing is well-founded. Whether they gain masonry techniques in class or win new tools at the competition, students build confidence by applying the specific skills and work habits they learn in class. In this way, Boys Republic's Masonry course equips teens with self-assurance and aplomb both on and off the construction site.

9th Annual Car Show Benefits Boys and Girls Alike

“Even though I’m social I’m very shy,” Lauryn, a Monrovia Day Treatment student, confesses. “But it’s good to be open to new experiences.” Lauryn took her own advice when she waited tables for the first time at the Friends of Steve McQueen Car Show Dinner. On June 3, Lauryn joined other Boys and Girls Republic students who served the annual dinner.

As boys and girls brought plates of stuffed peppers, blackened fillet medallions, and mango sorbet to the 500 dinner guests, many got their first taste working in fine dining.

The students prepared for their food services debut beforehand. “We took classes where we learned how to speak with soft, rounded words like ‘if you please’ and ‘my pleasure,’” Lauryn explains. “We also learned how to serve and clear dishes properly.”

Lauryn continued to participate the next day at the Friends of Steve McQueen Car Show. Stationed at the Bomb Diggity Dog food booth, Lauryn helped adults restock items and attract customers. She felt more



SETTING THE TABLE: Lauryn practices arranging dishes for the Car Show Dinner with the help of Food Services Director Frank Frobisher.

comfortable with the show spectators she had served the night before. “It was more informal and really fun,” Lauryn beams. “I built relationships with people at the dinner, so it was nice to get to talk to them at the show.”

The car show offers students like Lauryn an opportunity for positive interactions with the community. This year’s show also raised public awareness and proceeds that will support Boys Republic’s programs in guidance and education.

Lauryn appreciates being involved in the annual event. She stresses, “What’s most amazing is that so many people support us. If I can give two days out of my life to express my appreciation to the people who care about us, that’s the least I can do.” For Lauryn, who wants to study Business Management and eventually open her own restaurant, the care of supporters offers her the work experience and self-confidence she needs for a successful life.



DISPLAY VEHICLES: Boys Republic students take in a Porsche 911 at the Friends of Steve McQueen Car and Motorcycle Show on June 4.

Memorials Honor Special People, Events Through the Lives of Children

A memorial contribution to Boys Republic and Girls Republic is a meaningful way to honor a special person, a special event or the memory of a friend or loved one. Your gift will reap a second benefit as well by contributing directly to the programs of Boys and Girls Republic. In this way, the honor paid the designee will live on perpetually in the lives of the deserving young people you have helped.

The following are memorial and commemorative contributions made from March 1, 2016 through July 5, 2016.

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Boys Republic Report

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Boys Republic and Girls Republic are private, non-profit, non-sectarian agencies helping troubled children aged 13 to 18. Rules for acceptance and participation in these programs are the same for everyone without regard for race, color, national origin, age, sex or handicap.

www.boysrepublic.org



Longtime Wreath Assistant Supervisor Retires

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But Adela's importance to the year-round Della Robbia wreath program extended beyond her daily duties. When Adela retired this past April, Boys Republic employees lost a caring coworker who united them through her other talents. Staff describe Adela as an excellent cook who generously, and often, shared her delicious dishes with them.

Adela's plans for retirement include cooking, but she is most looking forward to relaxing at home. Spending time caring for her five grandchildren and ten great grandchildren will also keep her occupied. Yet Adela's time away from Boys Republic's pod barn will prove short-lived. She plans to return during upcoming Della Robbia wreath production to help supervise staff and sell her popular homemade tamales to appreciative Boys Republic employees.

Make A Choice . . .

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make a choice.

Lastly, my poor choices put me at Boys Republic; however, this has NOT been a consequence but an opportunity AND the turning point of my life. Boys Republic has kept me off the streets, kept me out of prison and possibly saved my life from those same streets I once embraced. Boys Republic IS opportunity: opportunity to gather an education, a skill, a trade and all through the stress of responsibility. That's the essence of Boys Republic. Taking advantage of these opportunities IS making a choice.

In conclusion, many of us here are the products of fatherless homes, and fear changing our mentality or behavior and not identifying the opportunities in front of us. I stand before you accountable for my choices, but I also stand before you asking you to do something that will ultimately define your life. **MAKE A CHOICE!**"