



Fall 2019

# BOYS REPUBLIC & Report

## Della Robbia Wreaths: The Gift That Gives Twice

■ Chino Hills, California:  
Wreath production creates  
student jobs and program  
support.

A Della Robbia wreath is truly a gift within a gift. Besides its fresh, fragrant contribution to your holiday decor or the cheer it brings to a friend or associate, your Della Robbia wreath gives something else. It gives a second chance to a deserving child working to overcome the trauma of abuse and neglect. Students engage in meaningful after-school work producing Della Robbia wreaths. In turn, proceeds from the wreaths that they sell help pay for a portion of the counseling and education—literally, the second chance—the teenagers receive in the program.

This second chance happens all year at Boys Republic's treatment community





## *Della Robbia Wreath Production Begins 96th Year*

and school. Our students' education includes an extensive roster of vocational programs and various work experiences on campus. The Della Robbia wreath program serves as a work situation that every student on campus participates in year round. Sackfuls of seed pods, pine cones, and other natural materials await students in Boys Republic's old wreath barn. The materials must be sorted, cleaned, and carefully drilled by hand. Then the teenagers help string the cones and pods together in decorative circles and store them in boxes and bins to await the holidays.

It's during the holiday season when the fresh Della Robbia wreaths are prepared for sale at Boys Republic. Due to the natural materials in Della Robbia wreaths, production must begin after Thanksgiving. Boxes of rings fashioned from seed



*STUDENT JOBS: Wreath production teaches teenagers specific warehouse work skills as well as important employable habits they need for any job. Above, a student assembles a fresh Della Robbia wreath by hand.*



*DOWN TO THE DETAILS: Rings of natural materials adorn Della Robbia wreaths. On average, 3,000 wreaths are assembled every day during production.*

pods and pine cones are piled ceiling high, wreath assembly booths are jam-packed into the old wreath barn, and an avalanche of early Christmas wreath orders guarantees what will be a busy production season.

In Boys Republic's wreath barn, scents of forest-fresh evergreen and the warm spice of pine cones waft through the air. The dizzying activity of teenagers blurs with hues of crimson, cocoa, and green in the wreath barn's assembly room. Here, students and staff affix the circles of rustic cones and seed pods onto fresh evergreen wreaths. A line of students and employees diligently polish Winesap apples and bright lemons. The fruit tops the fresh wreaths, and then the boys and girls hang each assembled wreath onto a conveyor belt.

The conveyor belt carries the Della Robbia wreaths through light mists of preserving spray, then transports them along the outer walls of the assembly room into the adjacent shipping room. This room, a converted gymnasium, accommodates rows of students and their supervisors packaging the wreaths. Students



hoist the wreaths off of the conveyor belt while others hold sturdy cardboard boxes in place. The teens work together to carefully package each wreath and then transfer the boxes to more students outside who stack them into delivery trucks.

When the trucks leave campus, the students know that the gifts customers have ordered for either themselves, their loved ones, or their associates will reach them across the nation and abroad. The teenagers also understand that they have just received something: a new experience in which they have worked together to accomplish something greater than themselves. The hours they spend following the supervisor's instructions on how to fasten decorations onto the evergreen



*WREATH BARN: Wreath assembly booths are jam-packed into the wreath barn, a converted old brick gymnasium at Boys Republic. Here, students and staff work together at an exciting pace assembling and shipping Della Robbia wreaths.*



boughs, maintaining a consistent work pace when they hang the wreaths on the conveyor belt, and working with their peers to ensure each Christmas wreath is carefully boxed results in tens of thousands of gifts for friends of Boys Republic.

Wreath production teaches these important work skills so students can be employable and responsible workers. It also imparts an additional gift to the students. As boys and girls apply the skills that will help them in the competitive job market, they also contribute to their own education and care. Della Robbia wreaths are a centerpiece of Boys Republic's self-support, raising \$2 million dollars annually to fund programs in guidance and education. By directly participating in the festive fundraising effort, troubled teenagers learn the value of earning their own way. And what a great present to receive this holiday season.



# Dedication Ceremony Held for Culinary Arts Center

Boys Republic's largest capital campaign, years of major construction, and enthusiastic donor support. These key ingredients made the Max Scott Center for the Culinary Arts the irresistible centerpiece of the Chino Hills campus. The Culinary Arts center, officially completed on September 12, offers a menu of improved vocational training programs and sustains the entire campus with meals three times a day, seven day per week.

To celebrate its completion, Boys Republic held a dedication and naming ceremony for the Max Scott Center for the Culinary Arts on October 2. Guests included major donors, agency volunteers, Boys Republic Board of Director members, civic leaders, and, of course, the honoree—director emeritus Max Scott.

Among the speakers were Board President Larry Walker and Executive Director Chris Burns, who provided informative remarks on the new



*DELICIOUS DISPLAY: A bakery student serves a guest dessert. The Culinary Arts center now has an expanded Teaching Bakery, which provides more space and serves more students in the popular vocational program.*



*LEAD DONORS: Mary Lou Boone and son Nick Boone credit director emeritus Max Scott for kindling their connection to Boys Republic.*

Max Scott Center for the Culinary Arts and its expanded role in helping young learners prepare for adult responsibility in a competitive job market.

Then students from the main campus, Girls Republic, and Monrovia Day Program served lunch to hungry guests. Guests dined on pork chops, macaroni and cheese, and glazed carrots. Throughout the meal, the attendees interacted with students as the girls and boys put their food services skills into practice.

Midway through the meal, a cafeteria divider opened to reveal a sumptuous array of mousses, meringues, custards, and cakes. Student bakers proudly presented the spread of desserts they had prepared for guests. The program concluded when guests were handed delectable cinnamon bundt cakes produced in the student-operated bakery. This gave attendees a taste of the quality desserts bakery students produce for Pavilions stores.

The Max Scott Center for the Culinary Arts and Mr. Scott's contributions to Boys Republic provide students with a recipe for success: the guidance and support troubled teens need to become responsible, contributing citizens.



## *Softball Fosters Teamwork Between Students and Staff*

In the heat of the afternoon, there is silence on the softball field. Thirty boys and their cottage staff watch in anticipation as the batter approaches the home plate. The pitcher, one of the staff members from Laws Cottage, pauses for a beat and then with a burst of speed, hurls the ball forward.

*Crack!* the ball flies towards the outfield. The batter takes off.

“Run, run, run!” shout his teammates urging him on. Some of the boys in the dugout have leapt to their feet. McCormick Cottage delightedly whoops, hollers, and claps as two of their players manage to run home. Everyone on the field is alternately shouting encouragement to their teammates and engaging in good-natured ribbing with the opposing team. All of the boys are animatedly chattering and fidgeting, but they settle back down again as the next batter approaches the base.

“Hey, good job,” says one student patting his out-of-breath teammate on the back. “Yeah, that was a good run,” adds one of the staff. Breathing heavily, his teammate plops down on the seat and turns his attention to the game. They all watch intently as one of the cottage staff prepares to bat.

Softball is the only intramural sport at Boys Republic that the cottage staff also participate in. For the students, playing sports with their supervisors reinforces the idea that the cottage staff are on ‘their side’ because they are on the same team working towards the same goal. The boys begin to realize that it is okay to rely on other people and that winning is much easier when the team works together. This exposure to working as a team helps the students to be more open to working with their staff in other aspects of the program.

Many of our students have not participated in organized sports before coming to Boys Republic and, for the majority, the idea of teamwork and good sportsmanship had never been introduced to them. However, over the course of the season, cottage staff can model what good sportsmanship



*UP TO BAT: Cottage staff and students participate in intramural softball as part of the Boys Republic program. Sports are integrated into the program to help the teens develop a variety of interpersonal and social skills, as well as improve their overall health.*

looks like. The students then begin to pick up on the behaviors that are expected of athletes. They can be seen to progress from taunting their teammates to giving words of encouragement like “try again” and “you got this”. They begin to empathize with their teammates’ mistakes instead of reacting in anger. Playing softball with their cottage staff gives the students a low-risk way to observe proper peer relationships and the opportunity to put their observations into practice.

Beyond the obvious physical health benefits, intramural sports are part of the Boys Republic program because they help develop interpersonal and social skills. The ability to be a team player, have a positive attitude, and effectively communicate are byproducts of organized sports that will help these teens when they leave school and return to the community. This kind of training is essential to help guide young men to successful, conventional lives.



## ***Boys Republic Community Comes Together to Honor Student Achievements***

This year, on September 19, local officials gathered with Boys Republic students and staff in the campus chapel to honor several of Boys Republic's most exemplary graduates. These disadvantaged youths have made great strides to overcome personal obstacles during their stay at Boys Republic.

During the ceremony, Carol Ritchie, one of Boys Republic's board members, remarks that, "it is not easy to make the choice to be successful". Indeed, that's what each of these diligent students has done. These graduates are recognized by their staff as dedicated individuals who did their best to improve themselves in academics and their personal lives. For this they are being rewarded with scholarships.



*WHATEVER IT IS YOU DECIDE TO DO, DREAM BIG: Sheila Mitchell, the Chief Probation Officer of L.A. County's Juvenile Services, was the keynote speaker at the awards ceremony. Ms. Mitchell encouraged students to set high standards for themselves and continue to work towards their goals.*

Unlike traditional scholarships, some of these awards do not need to be applied towards schooling. Because Boys Republic graduates frequently lack a traditional support system, they may apply these funds towards other expenses. Making purchases like new work boots or attire, paying for transportation or even putting a down payment on an apartment can greatly help set these young men and women up for success in furthering their education or getting a job.

Among the awards presented were:

- Fowler Merle-Smith Family Scholarship of \$1,500 to Angela Lara;
- Delight Groves Scholarship of \$750 to Ruby Rodriguez;
- Max L. Scott Scholarship of \$1,500 to Carmen Castillo, \$1,000 each to Brandford Luster, Lisbeth Morales, and Alex Polidore, \$750 each to Semaj James and Celestino Quintero;
- Everett and Jane Houser Scholarship of \$1,250 to Andrew Gonzalez;
- Steve McQueen Scholarship Award of \$1,500 to Ja Tonie Killebrew;
- Neile McQueen Scholarship of \$1,500 to Gregory Williams;
- Terry McQueen Scholarship of \$1,500 to Christian Saldivar;
- Carmen Combs Scholarship of \$2,500 to Alondra Jimenez;
- Don and Carol Bremer Endowed Aftercare Assistance Award of \$1,750 each to Mathew Andrade and Daniel Perez;
- Ed Korbel Scholarship of \$1,500 to Jaylen Williams;
- Klein Family Scholarship of \$1,500 to Nathanyal Campbell;
- Elizabeth Winkler Memorial Scholarship of \$1,000 to Anthony Watson;
- Paul and Mary Ganobcik "Nothing Without Labor" Scholarship of \$1,000 each to Andre Brandon and Davon Phenix;
- Alex Chisholm Scholarship of \$1,000 each to Junior Martinez and John Fralick;
- Friends of Steve McQueen Car Show Scholarship/Bruce Oliver Memorial of \$1,250 to Mia LaClair;

*(Please turn to page 8)*



# 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 to the designee will live on perpetually in the lives of the deserving young people you have helped.

The following are memorial contributions made from August 1, 2019 through October 23, 2019.

## **Donor / In Memory of:**

A Yankee Line Inc. /

Betli Anderson

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## **Donor / In Honor of:**

Ms. Ellen Breslin-Ponce /  
The Bakery Program

Ms. Shirley McLaughlin /  
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## **Boys Republic Report**

Boys Republic Report is published three times yearly by Boys Republic, 1907 Boys Republic Drive, Chino Hills, CA 91709. (909) 628-1217.

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](http://www.boysrepublic.org)





## *Scholarships Honor Student Achievements*

*(Continued from page 6)*



*THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT: Alumnus of the Year, Antonio Robinson, holds up his Blue Book. Mr. Robinson received his Blue Book at graduation for his exemplary accomplishments in the Boys Republic program.*

- Boys Republic Staff Scholarship of \$2,700 each to Daniel Kreis and Michael Lopez;
- Virginia Pease Hunt Scholarship of \$3,000 to Tylen Lee;
- Debbie Montano Memorial Scholarship of \$1,500 each to Trenton Brewer and Miguel Campos;
- Orange County Auxiliary/Garry Hodge Scholarship of \$1,250 to Domingo Rivas;
- H. B. Bell Scholarship of \$1,250 to Jonathan Arciniegas;
- Dick Reichelderfer and Frances Kurilich Scholarship of \$1,250 to Kenyatta Bowie;
- Frank and Marianne Graves Scholarship of \$750 each to Nicole Casteneda, Jose De Jesus Delgado, Lucia Garcia, Lee Henderson, Michael Medina, and Casandra Perez;
- Jeff Goodman Invisible Hands Essay Contest Winners of \$500 to Hunter Bolden, \$425 to Tyler Obregon, and \$300 to Michael Medina;
- Rams Head Award was presented to employee Donald Sullivan.



# *Della Robbia News*

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE BOYS REPUBLIC DELLA ROBBIA WREATH PROGRAM

FALL 2019

## Historic Wreath Program Will Again Help BR Teens Earn their Own Way

When the first Della Robbia Christmas wreath of 2019 travels by conveyor from the hand-assembly area to the shipping dock in the Boys Republic wreath barn late this November, it will signal the beginning of the 96th season of one of the oldest and largest self-help enterprises undertaken by any child-care program in the nation. It is an enterprise as rich in history and tradition as it is essential to the school's work with hundreds of troubled teens every year.

As they have every year since 1923, the students of Boys Republic will greet the holidays with the crackle of dried pine cones and seed pods, the scent of fresh California evergreen foliage and the sight of piles of greenery, boxes of fresh apples and lemons and stacks of shipping cartons.

Della Robbias come in two sizes. A 22-inch diameter wreath sells for \$55.95 complete with applicable taxes, shipping and handling. A 28-inch diameter wreath is priced at \$78.95, taxes, shipping and handling included. Wreaths can be bought by check, money order, Master Card, Visa, Discover, or

American Express Card.

Last-minute orders can be placed by telephone at 1-(800) 833-7769. Wreaths can also be ordered using the enclosed form. The completed form can be faxed to (909) 628-9688 or mailed to Boys Republic at 1907 Boys Republic Drive, Chino Hills, CA 91709.

Della Robbia wreaths can also be ordered by computer, using the Internet. Orders can be placed via Boys Republic's home page at: [www.boysrepublic.org](http://www.boysrepublic.org).

Early ordering is encouraged. If past years' experience again holds true this season, every wreath the students and their adult helpers can assemble from the stores of pine cones and pods will be purchased by mid-December and late orders will have to be returned unfilled.

Originally created as a work-experience vehicle for students in residence, over the years the Boys Republic Della Robbia wreath campaign became as well a supplemental source of funds for the agency's non-profit programs of counseling and education. It continues to serve that dual purpose today, providing

*(Continued on last page of "Della Robbia News")*





# Distinctive Della Robbia Wreaths Called “The Very Image of Holiday Celebrating”

They have been called “the very image of holiday celebrating” and “Christmas cheer in a box.” They are Boys Republic’s world-famous Della Robbia Christmas wreaths, distinctive, all-natural decorations that have been an important part of Christmas to families throughout the nation and elsewhere for 96 years.

Hefty rings of fresh California evergreen boughs

encrusted with pine cones, seed pods and burrs and then highlighted with fresh apples and lemons, Della Robbia wreaths look and smell like Christmas itself.

Because of the fresh materials they contain, the final hand-assembly, packaging and shipment of the finished wreaths is limited to a period of only a few weeks at the start of the holiday season. Yet each

*(Continued on last page of “Della Robbia News”)*

## Anatomy of a Della Robbia

### FLOWERING EUCALYPTUS

These “fat thimbles” come from blooming eucalyptus trees in Ventura and Whittier, California.

### PINE CONES

Cones from a variety of pine and fir trees are used in every wreath, some gathered at altitudes of up to 10,000 feet in the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

### EVERGREEN BOUGHS

Supple noble fir evergreens are harvested in the forests of Oregon and Washington. No trees are harmed in the pruning process.

### PLUMOSUM

Named for their feather-like plumes, these novel cones are native to Israel and South Africa.

### WINESAP APPLES & FRESH LEMONS

Hand-rubbed in alcohol and then lacquered to keep them colorful and plump.

### LOTUS POD

This distinctive water lily seed casing with many of the seeds still intact is gathered in the fall from local lakes and ponds.

### BOTTLE TREE POD

This pod is from a tree native to Australia and now grows in San Fernando Valley, California.



Note: The number, selection and placement of cones and seedpods upon the Della Robbia Wreath may vary each year, depending upon the availability of these natural materials.



Phone, Fax, Modem or Mail In Your  
**Last-Minute Wreath Orders**

**Phone:** (800) 833-7769    **Fax** (909) 628-9688

**Internet:** [www.boysrepublic.org](http://www.boysrepublic.org)

**Mail:** Boys Republic, 1907 Boys Republic Dr., Chino Hills, CA 91709

**WREATH ORDERING INSTRUCTIONS - PLEASE READ CAREFULLY**

1. PLEASE FILL OUT FORM COMPLETELY. INCLUDE FULL ADDRESSES WITH ZIP CODES.
2. WREATH ORDERS ARE PROCESSED AND SHIPPED IN THE ORDER RECEIVED.
3. WREATHS SHIPPED TO ARIZONA CONTAIN NO FRUIT; HOWEVER, THEY INCLUDE ADDITIONAL PODS AND A RED BOW.
4. ONLY 22-INCH WREATHS WILL BE SHIPPED TO ADDRESSES OUTSIDE CONTINENTAL U.S. AND THEY GO UPS OR AIR PARCEL POST AT ADDITIONAL CUSTOMER EXPENSE.
5. NOTE: DELLA ROBBIA WREATHS CANNOT BE SHIPPED TO P.O. BOXES.
6. AVOID DUPLICATION. IF YOU TELEPHONE OR FAX YOUR ORDER, PLEASE DO NOT ALSO MAIL IT.

Wreath Size	SHIP TO: (PRINT NAMES AND FULL ADDRESSES, INCLUDING ZIP CODES)

**CREDIT CARD PURCHASES**

[ ] VISA [ ] M/C [ ] DISCOVER [ ] AMX Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

CCV#

Cardholder: \_\_\_\_\_

**PERSONAL & BUSINESS CHECK PURCHASES**

Please make checks payable to Boys Republic

**SENDER INFORMATION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No: \_\_\_\_\_

**WREATH PRICES\***

\_\_\_\_\_ 22" WREATHS @ \$55.95, COMPLETE \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 28" WREATHS @ \$78.95, COMPLETE \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL ORDER** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\* PRICES INCLUDE APPLICABLE TAXES, SHIPPING, AND HANDLING.

\* Shipments outside of U.S. Continental limits must go Air Parcel Post or UPS at customer's expense.

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

TO SEND BY MAIL OR FAX, CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE



# Della Robbias Evoke Holiday Charm and Joy

*(Continued from page 2 of "Della Robbia News")*

Della Robbia wreath represents a full year of effort by Boys Republic and Girls Republic students and the professional wreath staff that works with them.

Beginning each January, sacks full of seed pods and pine cones used to adorn the Della Robbias are sorted, cleaned, drilled and wired. The cones and pods are then fastened together into decorative arrays and then stored in boxes and bins in an old gymnasium transformed into a wreath barn on the agency's Chino Hills campus.

Altogether, more than three million individual pods and cones from as many as a dozen varieties of trees and plants are collected, prepared and stored each year to await the holiday season.

The distinctive design of the cone, pod and fruit-studded Della Robbia wreath was inspired by the ceramic wreath sculptures of the Della Robbia family of artisans in 16th century Florence, Italy. Margaret Fowler, a founder of Boys Republic, happened to see an original Della Robbia ceramic while vacationing in Europe in the early 1920's, just at a time when she was searching for a craft project that would teach the children in her care the value of honest labor. She brought the idea home with her and, in 1923, the first few dozen Della Robbia wreaths were made and sold door-to-door for \$2.50 each.

So successful was the project that the following year wreath production was increased to 107. It was increased again for the third year and again for the fourth. Wreath sales quickly grew to 500 per season, then 1,000, then 1,500.

In the early 1950's, Boys Republic's Board of Directors formalized the Della Robbia program,

expanding it to serve as a key component in students' work experience activities and as a primary source of supplemental funding for the agency's non-profit operations. They converted an old, red brick

gymnasium on the main campus into a permanent wreath barn and installed an automated conveyer system to speed the wreaths from each hand-assembly stage to the next. By 1955, production had swelled to 30,000 wreaths per season.

Today, nearly 40,000 Della Robbias are produced in a 13-day period between Thanksgiving and

mid-December each year. But despite that large volume, the wreaths are made as they have always been made, carefully hand-tied, one at a time.

Each wreath is packaged and ready to ship within minutes of being completed. Most wreaths are shipped within 24 hours of manufacture. Those having to wait an extra day are stored in a cooler to keep them florist-fresh.

## *Historic Campaign Enters 96th Season*

*(Continued from front page of "Della Robbia News")*

meaningful after-school and weekend work for hundreds of students a year and helping Boys Republic contribute significantly to its own annual operating budget. Proceeds from wreath sales and other self-help activities and donations represent a savings to taxpayers of nearly \$4 million a year.



**WORK EXPERIENCE:** *The Della Robbia wreath program provides year-round work experience for teenagers preparing for responsible adulthood.*