

OROVILLE

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Local

Businesses team up for high school sports

KYRA GOTTESMAN - Special to the Mercury-Register

OROVILLE -- Several local businesses have committed to donating a portion of sales through the end of this month to financially strapped Oroville and Las Plumas high schools' athletic departments, and are challenging other businesses to join the team effort. Lisa Beachamp, marketing director for Oroville RV Boat & Self Storage, says she came up with the idea to challenge all local businesses to help the high schools, which are each \$17,500 short of funding for athletic programs this school year, after she learned of Dutch Bros Coffee "Give Back to the Community Program."

Through this program, the Oroville coffee shop donated \$1 from every beverage sold between Aug. 24 and 28 to the schools' athletic departments.

"I heard about what Dutch Bros was doing and the need in the high schools and I thought, 'What can we do?'" said Beachamp. "I came up with the idea for the business challenge because if a bunch of us get involved it will spread the burden. A little bit from a lot of businesses will make a big difference."

Answering the challenge, which Beachamp made in an e-mail blast to local businesses last week, are her firm, Galeria Mexicana, Driskill Insurance and Comp U Bytes.

Oroville RV, Boat & Self Storage owner Mike Cunningham said he'll donate \$5 from every storage unit rented during September to the schools.

"I'm hoping as word gets out that more businesses will join us," said Cunningham.

Galeria Mexicana owner Celina Casimero has committed to donating 10 percent of her store sales throughout the month.

"I'm letting all my customers know that the money they spend in my store this month will not only buy them something they will enjoy, but it will also help buy the kids in our community something that they will enjoy and benefit from. I hope this makes them feel extra good about their purchases and makes a difference for the schools," said Casimero.

Mike Driskill, of Driskill Insurance Agency and an Oroville High School graduate, said he was happy to have been "challenged" and will donate \$5 from every new insurance policy he sells this month.

"It's just the right thing to do," said Driskill.

Comp U Bytes owner Gary Norwood said he'll contribute \$25 from the sale of each new computer system sold in his store during September to the schools.

"It's small businesses in American communities that keep things afloat so chipping in to help support our schools when they need funding just makes sense," said Norwood.

The \$35,000 combined shortfall in the high schools' athletic budgets is the result of continuing state budget cuts, according to Oroville High School District Superintendent Oran Roberts.

Currently the head coaches from each school and the athletic booster clubs are also taking on the burden of making up the financial shortage, said Roberts, in addition to the fundraising they traditionally do to support the various teams.

"I think it is wonderful. We are greatly appreciative for the sake of our students that local businesses are getting involved. The coaches and athletic supporters are doing what they can to mitigate the effects of the state budget cuts so we all are thankful for this support from the community," he said.

For more information on how to join the challenge, call 533-9900.