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CLUB BRINGS GIFTS TO NEEEDY FAMILIES

# Group gets Active in helping local children

Twenty/thirty-something men dedicated to raising 'a bunch of money'

BY PAT FERRIER  
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About 50 Larimer County families will open gifts this morning thanks to a group of men who believe they have a mission to help make lives better for Larimer County's children.

The Active 20/30 Club, so named because of the age of the men involved — 20 to 39 year olds — is a group of about two dozen men dedicated to raising a bunch of money for children's charities.

Last week they took 47 kids shopping to help make the holidays a little brighter.

The kids, from Partners Mentoring Youth, were given \$50 gift cards to buy gifts, not for themselves, but for their loved ones.

It was not just a fun event, but also a lesson in how to budget and spend a limited amount of money, said Chris Imsland, Partners executive director.

Without the 20/30 group the event wouldn't have happened, he said. "This was something extra the kids received. We could have just given them \$50 and told them to go have fun but that wouldn't

have been as meaningful."

## Giving something back

Time, treasure and talent — that's all it takes to make a difference in the life of a child, said Shawn Sullivan, co-founder of the local Active 20/30 Club. And, it's a mission the group takes to heart.

In its first year, Active 20/30 raised enough to donate \$35,000 each to Partners Mentoring Youth and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Larimer County.

Within the next few years, they hope to raise \$500,000, said Sullivan and co-

founder Pete Kelly.

"Pete and I saw a need," Sullivan said.

"There seems to be a gray dividing line ... people who are (older than) 45 have their network of people they work with and talk to whether in business or philanthropy and the 20 to 39 year-olds do their own networking and philanthropy," he said.

"We were trying to find something unique that we could get collectively excited about as younger individuals. ... The end goal revolves around the kids and raising money for them."

Imsland said the group is "the next gen-

## About Active 20/30

- > **Founded** nationally in 1910
- > **Founded** in Larimer County in 2006
- > **Information:** Jim Sampson, 266-7132
- > **Meetings:** First and third Monday of each month
- > **Members:** 22
- > **Mission:** to help disadvantaged kids
- > **Motto:** A man is never as tall as when he is kneeling to help a child

eration of philanthropists. Someone has to pick it up and they chose to do it."

The club collects its money through the Community Foundation, which makes donations tax deductible. It plans to apply for its own nonprofit designation in the near future, Sullivan said.

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Rich Abrahamson/The Coloradoan

**Shawn Sullivan, left, and Pete Kelly**, both members of the Northern Colorado's Active 20/30, helped raise money which was donated to the Boys' & Girls' Club of Larimer County and Partners Mentoring Youth. They also took 47 less fortunate children shopping for gifts for their families. The pair are pictured Dec. 18 at the Everitt Co.





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## Setting a goal

Sullivan and Kelly got the idea to raise money for kids from their work on the board of Partners Mentoring Youth, a group that pairs adult mentors with children.

The pair identified a core group of people they believed

had the time, talent and treasure to give back to the community.

"We did intentionally go out and recruit high-horsepower people ... the people we thought could make a difference, roll up their sleeves and get involved with children's charities," Kelly said.

The men already were involved in 13 different children's charities from Turning Point and Educo to the Boys & Girls Clubs. Three serve on the Partners board.

The men each pay \$450 a year in dues which helps cover operation costs. In addition, each member is expected to donate a minimum of \$2,000 per year.

"We recognize that not everyone can write a check for \$2,000 but everyone should have the ability to go out and solicit donations," Kelly said.

Active 20/30 also raises money to bolster its coffers. In its first fundraiser the group raised \$85,000 by throwing a Vines and

Wine party and raffling off an exclusive weekend in Napa Valley.

At the end of the party, the winning couple flew off to Napa in a private jet for the weekend.

"Time will tell, but we pride ourselves in doing large gifts," said Kelly, a Realtor with Everitt Commercial Partners.

It doesn't all have to be big money, but as with the Christmas for Kids event two weeks before Christmas, it has to have a big impact, he said.