

Let Them Eat Jelly Beans

San Diego boy donates online advertising income to homeless

By Ann Aubrey Hanson, The Southern Cross, August 15, 2002

POINT LOMA - Danny Stricker is a journalist, a Web site owner and a philanthropist. He is also 12 years old.

On July 26, Danny donated his entire income from his Web advertising to Msgr. Joe Carroll, president of St. Vincent de Paul Village in San Diego: more than 25,000 Jelly Belly jellybeans. The jellybeans were delivered to the Village in downtown San Diego in nine boxes, filled with sampler packets of the flavorful, chewy candies.

"One box got lost in my office, joked Father Joe - as he is commonly known. 'By the time we find it, it'll probably be empty.'"

Father Joe accepted the candy on behalf of the hundreds of children who live, go to school or attend camps at St. Vincent de Paul Village.

Danny, who will enter seventh grade at Correia Junior High this fall, had earned the sweet profit by carrying a Jelly Belly banner ad on his Web site: www.dannyskidspage.com. On the Web site, Danny posts photos and interviews of the many sports, political and entertainment personalities he has interviewed.

Danny started his journalism career by proposing a kids' page to his local newspaper.

"I looked at the (*Union-Tribune*) and it had a kid's page and I wanted the *Beacon* to have one, so I called and said I wanted to do it," Stricker said. The *Beacon* agreed to his proposal and now once a month, Danny produces a kids' page for the paper, including interviews with notable personalities, word puzzles and other items of interest to kids.

It was his idea, according to father, Wally, and mother, Terry Stricker.

"When he didn't get a response to his first call," says Wally, "I figured that was it for the idea. But, Danny kept calling until he got through. It was his efforts that paid off."

His first published interview was with Yankee pitcher David Wells. A list of other interview subjects includes several notables from the San Diego Padres, including Kevin Towers, John Moores, Tony Gwynn and Ryan Klesko. He has also interviewed politicians and their wives (Richard Riordan and Mrs. Gray Davis) and television and movie celebrities. Danny also interviewed astronaut Sally Ride and published the interview on the NASA Web page.

Danny's interest in helping St. Vincent de Paul Village came from an interview he did with Father Joe.

"I like the work he is doing. I think it's really important. And I just wanted to help," says Danny, a Presbyterian.

Danny had previously visited the Jelly Belly manufacturing facility in Fairfield, Calif., in the Bay Area, while on vacation and had interviewed Bob Simpson, company president.

Danny proposed that Simpson's company advertise on his Web page, and Simpson agreed to the deal: payment would be in the form of Jelly Belly jellybeans. Danny soon found, however, that the deal was too much of a good thing. So, he decided to donate his proceeds (the equivalent of \$500 worth of advertising income) to Father Joe's Village children.

"Here's a boy with talent and interest who found a way to help do good for other children," says Father Joe. "He found a creative way to reach out and give to others."

Danny is now seeking new advertisers to join Jelly Belly on his Web site, which Pulitzer Prizewinning writer George Will has called his "favorite Web site. Without question."

He is in negotiations with Mail Boxes, Etc., and hopes to receive online ad payment from them in the form of postal goods that he would pass on to St. Vincent de Paul Village.

Danny hopes to negotiate with other companies who could pay with supplies or services.

"Anything that we aren't able to use, we would gladly hand on to other charities," says Father Joe, admitting, however, that there is little his endeavors couldn't use.

Companies who are interested in running an ad on Danny's page are encouraged to visit his Web site or call (619) 200-1683.