Bishop Scores!

By Randy Weiss
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Everyone caught football fever before Bishop Diego High's appearance in the CIF championship game. Making the CIF football finals was huge for Bishop Diego High and the Santa Barbara community. Principal and padre, Father Tom Elewaut, gave his blessing for a Friday pre-game campus rally for the Catholic school's 306-student body.

Eight sheet cakes collectively spelled G-O-O-D (chocolate) L-U-C-K (vanilla). ESPN SportsCenter-themed music blasted from our sound system. With the help of some work buddies, we tossed out Santa Barbara Bank & Trust Bank travel blankets, hats, hackey sacks and Nerf footballs.

Within 10 minutes, everything was gone, except for some hats and one last travel blanket kept for future reordering — the best assurance of getting the same exact product.

As we finished cleaning up, one student approached in his bright red Bishop Cardinals shirt. I went for broke. The conversation went like this:

Him: Excuse me, but do you have any more blankets left, please?

Me: Only if your name is Kenny.

Him: You know me?

Me: Yes, you're famous. We actually met awhile back.

Him: You have a good memory.

I never would have expected him to remember our brief encounter months ago at a Channel City Club luncheon where Stedman Graham (yes, as in Oprah) spoke on diversity. Kenny was a last-minute guest at our table — the lone teen among nine others, average age 60-plus. He quickly became the focal point of all table conversation.

Poised and polite beyond his young years, he shared his background and his dreams, patiently answering the barrage of questions fired his way. I marveled at this incredible young man who had success written all over him.

I'm not sure if seeing him again was some sort of divine intervention, but I do know he was now looking sharp in his new blue hat … and traveling with my very last blanket.

It took Bishop's miracle season and 306 kids like Kenny to remind us that our bright future is all around us every day. Our thanks, congratulations and "hats off" to all of them for leading the charge …

Randy Weiss is investor and community relations vice president at Santa Barbara Bank & Trust.

Andrea Garcia, Bishop Diego High's girls' junior varsity basketball coach and a Santa Barbara Bank & Trust manager, center, and her siblings, Bruce and Felicia, keep things all in the Cardinals family.

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Above: Chris DeVries, a proud Bishop mom and Santa Barbara Bank and Trust Senior Vice President, serves cake to the Bishop student body.

Below: Matt Keenan and Brian Schwabecher of Santa Barbara Bank and Trust, with Cardinal red aprons join in the festivities of the day.