

FOOTBALL HERO ENCOURAGES LAS VEGAS MEMBERS

The movie *Rudy* is a true story and an unforgettable testament to the power of dreams and the triumph of the common man. Millions have been inspired by the movie. Now, let the man behind the movie inspire you!" With these words, the Boys and Girls Group recently invited all the Las Vegas members to hear Rudy Ruettiger speak at the Community Center.

About 170 excited members and guests filled the lobby to greet Rudy when he arrived. A special message from Los Angeles member John Astin was read to Rudy — special because Mr. Astin's son Sean starred in the movie *Rudy*.

Rudy once said: "To go to Notre Dame, you had to be in the top 10 percent of your class. To play football, you had to be big and strong. I was neither of those things. But I had a dream and a passion for life, and nothing was going to stop me from fulfilling my dream. I fulfilled my dream to play on the field of Notre Dame. It may have been for only 27 seconds, but it was enough to fill my heart forever."

Almost 25 years later, Rudy is living another dream: to make sure that children from all nations build a belief in themselves. For information on his new foundation for children, visit his website at www.rudyint.com.

In the beginning of his talk, he asked the small children whether they made their bed in the morning and did their homework and what the result was from accomplishing these tasks. One of the young kids said, "Cause and effect" — Rudy replied, "I'll remember that phrase." We all applauded because we knew that we were sharing the spirit of Buddhism with Rudy. He related so well with the children — without making the adults feel left out.

And when he touched on adult matters, he did it in a way that the children could understand as well. Rudy demonstrated how you must take action to accomplish your dreams.

After a standing ovation Rudy stayed and talked to all who wanted to talk to him, signing autographs and taking pictures. We gave Rudy several of President Ikeda's books as a thank you gesture and Rudy autographed a copy of his new children's book for President Ikeda.

Although Rudy is a highly sought-after motivational speaker earning thousands of dollars, he volunteered his time to speak to the Las Vegas members. For all of us there, meeting Rudy was priceless!

— FERN REYNOLDS and
AUDREY DEMPSEY