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## ShyGirl Teaches Manners

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Thelma Domenici knows the importance of the perfect handshake.

Her grip is not too firm and definitely not too loose. She looks you square in the eyes as she takes your hand.

Perfect.

As former president of Hospital Home Healthcare and former vice president of St. Joseph Healthcare Corp. (and a sister of Sen. Pete Domenici), Domenici has learned and lived what works in the world.

After 30 years in business, she still teaches careerists what she thinks works out there. These days, however, you might catch Domenici having the most fun teaching etiquette and community service to young girls.

For two years, her Albuquerque company, Thelma Domenici and Associates, has branched out to include Aunt Thelma's ShyGirl— etiquette classes for girls ages 10 to 12.

"Having good manners never goes out of style," said Domenici.

Besides learning to set a table for a formal dinner, the girls in the six-week program pick a service project and then make a plan to raise money for the cause or actually get out and help when they are needed.

So far, the projects have included a car wash to raise money for Ronald McDonald House and the Roadrunner Food Bank. They have also collected food and organized roadside trash pickups.

The girls are guided through weekly sessions of party planning while being taught basic etiquette, such as writing thank-you notes and invitations.

"But I really believe that one of their favorite things to do in the classes is to help out in their communities," said Domenici. "We let them come up with the ideas. They can choose to clean up their neighborhoods, prepare meals for the elderly or raise money. It's entirely up to them, but I think the feeling of accomplishment is perhaps the best lesson they can learn."

The final exam for the girls is a party for their parents. The girls pick the theme, send the invitations, plan the menu and then play hostess.

"It's a time for me to see these wonderful young girls as they blossom," said Domenici. "Often, these preteen years are difficult for girls. It's not easy to go from middle school to high school without feeling a bit insecure. But I think they leave the ShyGirl program with confidence in so many areas."

Domenici also teaches Social Survival 101 for college and graduate students, to prepare them for the work world; ShyForce for girls in their early teens as they deal with dating and peer pressure; and SForce for high school junior and senior girls preparing for independence.

