No shot, no school

By Dorothy Zirkle
City Heights Life

Starting with the upcoming 2011-12 school year, students entering grades 7-12 are required to show proof that they have been immunized with the booster vaccine for whooping cough, also known as pertussis.

This requirement, stipulated by California Assembly Bill 354, took effect July 1. The law mandates what is formally known as the Tdap booster shot, which combines vaccines for tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis.

Pertussis is a very contagious respiratory disease that can be severe and last for months. The immunity received from either early childhood immunization or pertussis disease wears off over time, leaving older students and adults susceptible again to pertussis. Tdap booster shots can protect students, families, schools, and the community against pertussis outbreaks.

The new requirement affects all students whether they attend public, charter or private schools, and whether they are current, new or transfer students. The law has two phases:

• For the 2011-12 school year, all students entering seventh through 12th grades will need proof of a Tdap shot before starting school. The first day of school in the San Diego school year, students entering grades 7-12 are required to show proof that they have received the Tdap booster shot, which combines vaccines for tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis.

A model farmers market
City Heights Farmers market

City Heights benefiting from multiple beautification efforts

By Helen Gao
City Heights Life

Throughout City Heights, canyons are being restored, streets cleaned up and graffiti eradicated under several beautification initiatives sponsored by public and private organizations. As an add- ed bonus, these initiatives employ residents in the community.

Organizations leading the cleanup and restoration efforts include: the City Heights Business Improvement District, City Heights Canyon and Community Alliance, Community Housing Works, City of San Diego, Price Charities, Ocean Discovery Institute, San Diego Canyonlands, Charities, Ocean Discovery Institute, Price Charities, Urban Corps, San Diego Canyonlands and Community Alliance, Community Housing Works, City of San Diego, Price Charities, Ocean Discovery Institute, Price Charities, Urban Corps, San Diego Canyonlands.

The Urban Corps, which has contracts with several City Heights organizations, is one of the most visible. Every day, Urban Corps members clad in green uniforms can be seen sweeping University Avenue between 33rd and 50th streets and Fairmount Avenue between Orange Avenue and Landis Street. They also do extensive volunteer- ing services in the community, including helping elderly and low-income residents paint and weatherize their homes. Urban Corps is a nonprofit program that offers job training and education to disadvantaged young adults aged 18 to 25. Many of its mem-

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Redistricting underway
San Diego residents have a once-in-a-decade chance to give input on redrawing of City Council district boundaries.

Attention residents!
City Heights Life wants to hear from you! Please submit your articles, photos, letters, events or story ideas to editor@cityheightslife.com.

EDUCATION

Homework help
Library offers free tutoring program for students.

Ayuda con tarea
Biblioteca ofrece programa gratuito para estudiantes.

SERVICES

A model farmers market
City Heights Farmers market

city benefits from multiple beautification efforts

By Helen Gao
City Heights Life

Es evidente en City Heights que se está saneando los caño- nes, limpiando las calles y que se está erradicando el graffití gracias a varias iniciativas de ornato patrocinadas por orga-

siatute, San Diego Canyonlands and Urban Corps of the Condado de San Diego.

La organización más vis-

La organización más vis-

Si no se vacunan no podrán asistir a la escuela

Por Dorothy Zirkle
City Heights Life

A partir del próximo año escolar 2011-12, los estudiantes que ingresan a los grados 7-12 tienen que demostrar que recibieron la vacuna de refuerzo contra la tos ferina (whooping cough), también conocida como pertussis.

Este requisito, establecido por la Ley 354 de la Asamblea de California entró en vigor el 1 de julio. La ley exige que se vacune a los estu-

VACUNAS

Por Dorothy Zirkle
City Heights Life

Pertussis is a very contagious respiratory disease that can be severe and last for months. The immunity received from either early childhood immunization or pertussis disease wears off over time, leaving older students and adults susceptible again to pertussis.

The new requirement affects all students whether they attend public, charter or private schools, and whether they are current, new or transfer students. The law has two phases:

• For the 2011-12 school year, all stu-

VACUNAS

Por Dorothy Zirkle
City Heights Life

Pertussis is a very contagious respiratory disease that can be severe and last for months. The immunity received from either early childhood immunization or pertussis disease wears off over time, leaving older students and adults susceptible again to pertussis.

The new requirement affects all students whether they attend public, charter or private schools, and whether they are current, new or transfer students. The law has two phases:

• For the 2011-12 school year, all stu-

VACUNAS

Por Dorothy Zirkle
City Heights Life

Pertussis is a very contagious respiratory disease that can be severe and last for months. The immunity received from either early childhood immunization or pertussis disease wears off over time, leaving older students and adults susceptible again to pertussis.

The new requirement affects all students whether they attend public, charter or private schools, and whether they are current, new or transfer students. The law has two phases:

• For the 2011-12 school year, all stu-

VACUNAS

Por Dorothy Zirkle
City Heights Life

Pertussis is a very contagious respiratory disease that can be severe and last for months. The immunity received from either early childhood immunization or pertussis disease wears off over time, leaving older students and adults susceptible again to pertussis.

The new requirement affects all students whether they attend public, charter or private schools, and whether they are current, new or transfer students. The law has two phases:

• For the 2011-12 school year, all stu-
Urban Corps members turn trees and mow grass near 33rd Street and University Avenue. Above: Urban Corps members work together to remove bulky trash items. Below: An Urban Corps member takes care of the landscaping in the City Heights Business Improvement District. Photos courtesy of Urban Corps of San Diego County.

Urban Corps, from P1

COVER STORY

CLEANUP, from P1

bers are high school dropouts from City Heights who are looking for a second chance. “Since our founding in 1989, we have had a huge population that came out of City Heights to join our program,” said Sam Duran, CEO of Urban Corps and a former City Heights resident. “Most recently, 11 City Heights youths have joined the program thanks to a Price Charities-sponsored job training and community beautification program. When they are not in the field they are in school earning a high school diploma.”

Duran said the Urban Corps’ long-standing involvement in City Heights grew out of strong support from the community. For example, the City Heights Business Improvement District has hired Urban Corps for the past six years for sidewalk sweeping and power washing, litter and graffiti removal, landscape maintenance and other services as part of its Clean and Safe Program.

It’s not just the streets and alleys that are the focus of beautification efforts in City Heights. The canyons are also getting cleaned up and restored. Urban Corps has played a role in that as well, and other organizations are involved.

With $140,000 in funding provided by Price Charities, REI, and the San Diego Foundation, San Diego Canyonlands is improving the Manzanita, Swan, Hollywood, and 47th Street canyons. A recent Price Charities grant has enabled Canyonlands to hire six City Heights residents to train them for careers in habitat restoration, global positioning satellite (GPS) data gathering and geographic information system (GIS) mapping. Two of the hires are graduates of the GIS program at Hoover High School who are attending San Diego State University.

With their assistance, Canyonlands will produce detailed maps of the canyons so it can develop comprehensive plans for trails, restoration, and amenities. The plans will serve as the catalyst to raise money for the improvements.

“The goal is to connect all four canyons with a loop trail, so on any given day you can follow a map and hike through all four canyons in City Heights,” said Eric Bowlby, Canyonlands’ executive director.

Ultimately, the nonprofit would like to create a citywide canyonlands park by having some 11,000 acres of scattered city property permanently dedicated as open space.

With help from its partners in the City Heights Canyon and Community Alliance, Canyonlands has restored habitats in Swan Canyon next to Hamilton Elementary School and refurbished a badly eroded footpath in Manzanita Canyon up to Azalea Park. In addition, the nonprofit has hired a full-time coordinator to cultivate friends of the canyon groups to watch out for illegal dumping and take part in cleanups and restorations.

Because of illegal dumping and the continuing flow of debris carried by storm drains into low-lying areas, it’s a constant battle to keep the canyons clean. Volunteers organized by Canyonlands and its partners, including students from the Cesar Chavez Club at Monroe Clark Middle School, have already removed tons of trash from City Heights canyons.

“They are looking a whole lot better than they used to look, that’s for sure,” Bowlby said. “Ten years ago, they were a dangerous, messy eyesore. They were a dump before. Now we have gotten a handle on it. We have to continue to maintain it.”

LIMPIEZA, de P1

Corps es una organización sin fines de lucro que ofrece capacitación laboral y educación a jóvenes adultos entre las edades de 18 a 25 años de edad. Muchos de sus miembros son jóvenes de City Heights que tras abandonar los estudios secundarios buscan una segunda oportunidad.


Duran también dijo que la larga trayectoria de Urban Corps en City Heights se debe al sólido apoyo que reciben de la comunidad. Por ejemplo, City Heights Business Improvement District contrató a Urban Corps durante los últimos seis años para la limpieza y lavado a motor de las aceras, remocion de desperdicios y grafiti, mantenimiento de áreas verdes y otros servicios que ofrece el programa Clean and Safe.

No solo las calles y callesones son el blanco de los esfuerzos de ornato en City Heights. También se están limpiando y restaurando los cañones de la comunidad. Urban Corps, junto con otras organizaciones, juega un papel importante en este esfuerzo.

Gracias a $140,000 provenientes de Price Charities, REI y San Diego Foundation, San Diego Canyonlands está trabajando en los cañones Manzanita, Swan, Hollywood y el de la Calle 47. Una reciente subvención de Price Charities le permitió a Canyonlands contratar a seis residentes de City Heights y entrenarlos en carreras relacionadas con la restauración de habitats, recolección de información a través de satélites de posicionamiento global (GPS) y mapas a través del sistema de información geográfica (GIS). Dos de las personas contratadas son egresadas del programa GIS de Hoover High School y asisten a San Diego State University.

Con su ayuda, Canyonlands obtienen drámapos detallados de los cañones con los que podrá desarrollar planes específicos para los senderos, restauración y demás servicios. Estos planes serán utilizados como catalizadores para obtener fondos para realizar todas las mejoras.

De acuerdo a Eric Bowlby, director ejecutivo de Canyonlands: “La meta es unir los cuatro cañones a través de un sendero para que cualquiera pueda, con la ayuda de un mapa, explorar los cuatro cañones de City Heights”. En última instancia, la organización sin fines de lucro de la ciudad utiliza estos cañones logrando que unos $1,000 acres de terreno pertenecientes a la ciudad se utilicen permanentemente como áreas recreativas al aire libre.

Con la ayuda de sus socios de City Heights Canyon and Community Alliance, Canyonlands restauró varios habitat del cañón Swan ubicado frente a Monrove Clark Middle School y un sendero erosionado que va desde el cañón Manzanita hasta Azalea Park. Además, la organización sin fines de lucro también contrató a un coordinador de tiempo completo para crear grupos “amigos de los cañones” que vigilen el área para evitar que se utilice como basurero ilegal y participen en los esfuerzos de limpieza y restauración.

Debido al uso del área como basurero ilegal y al flujo continuo de desperdicios a través de los desagües hacia las áreas más bajas, mantener los cañones limpios se ha convertido en una batalla constante. Voluntarios organizados por Canyonlands y sus socios, incluyendo estudiantes del Club Cesar Chavez de Monroe Clark Middle School, han logrado remover toneladas de desperdicios de los cañones de City Heights.

“Lleno mucho mejor que antes, sin lugar a dudas,” dijo Bowlby. “Hace diez años eran lugares horribles, peligrosos y sucios. Eran un basurero. Hemas logrado controlar el problema y tenemos que seguir dándole mantenimiento al área.”
City Heights Farmers Market serves low-income shoppers

By Megan Burks
Speak City Heights

The produce stalls at the City Heights Farmers Market were lined with strawberries so fresh they shined. Some still carried their delicate vines.

Ayan Mohamed, who has an 18-month-old, was quick to exchange a Women, Infants and Children (WIC) voucher for a large basket of the fruit. They’re her son’s favorite—he likes them even more than cake, which she insisted he’d spit out in favor of something fresher.

“I started with him at a very young age, as soon as he started eating solid foods,” Mohamed said. “He got used to (fruits and vegetables) so that’s what he eats right now.”

But healthy eating wasn’t always a habit for Mohamed, who said she favored fast-food before becoming pregnant. She was able to change her diet because the City Heights Farmers Market opened in her neighborhood and accepted WIC vouchers.

The market celebrated its third anniversary on June 18. Organizers held contests and arranged for dance and live music to mark the occasion. "Everyone said, 'This market isn’t going to work. Low-income people don’t shop at the market,'” said Blanca Melendez, director of the Network for a Healthy California.

On its first day, however, people lined up for hours, Blanca said. And they’ve continued to line up every Saturday morning since.

Market transactions now average about $10,000 a week, said Casey Anderson of the San Diego County Farm Bureau.

Many of those transactions are made using wooden tokens for which customers had traded in their CalFresh funds (food stamps), Women, Infants and Children (WIC) vouchers.

Organizers credit this success to their use of wooden tokens and have spent $70,000 in CalFresh funds. Weekly CalFresh spending has grown from $75 a week to $1,000.

“Part of the market’s intent was to highlight that EBT shoppers (those on public assistance) would buy fresh foods and support a farmers market,” said Anchi Mei, a program manager for the International Rescue Committee (IRC) in San Diego.

City Heights now has the highest food stamp redemption rate of any farmers market in the nation, Mei said.

Since it opened, customers have spent $70,000 in CalFresh funds. Weekly CalFresh spending has grown from $75 a week to $1,000.

Organizers credit this success to Fresh Fund, an IRC program that matches what customers spend in supplemental-aid dollars. If a WIC mother comes to the market with $5, she’ll actually have $10 to spend that day. The program was recently expanded to five other San Diego markets with grant money from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“Part of the market’s intent was to highlight that EBT shoppers (those on public assistance) would buy fresh foods and support a farmers market,” said Anchi Mei, a program manager for the International Rescue Committee (IRC) in San Diego.

City Heights now has the highest food stamp redemption rate of any farmers market in the nation, Mei said.

Since it opened, customers have spent $70,000 in CalFresh funds. Weekly CalFresh spending has grown from $75 a week to $1,000.

Organizers credit this success to Fresh Fund, an IRC program that matches what customers spend in supplemental-aid dollars. If a WIC mother comes to the market with $5, she’ll actually have $10 to spend that day. The program was recently expanded to five other San Diego markets with grant money from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“Part of the market’s intent was to highlight that EBT shoppers (those on public assistance) would buy fresh foods and support a farmers market,” said Anchi Mei, a program manager for the International Rescue Committee (IRC) in San Diego.

City Heights now has the highest food stamp redemption rate of any farmers market in the nation, Mei said.

Since it opened, customers have spent $70,000 in CalFresh funds. Weekly CalFresh spending has grown from $75 a week to $1,000.

Organizers credit this success to Fresh Fund, an IRC program that matches what customers spend in supplemental-aid dollars. If a WIC mother comes to the market with $5, she’ll actually have $10 to spend that day. The program was recently expanded to five other San Diego markets with grant money from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“Part of the market’s intent was to highlight that EBT shoppers (those on public assistance) would buy fresh foods and support a farmers market,” said Anchi Mei, a program manager for the International Rescue Committee (IRC) in San Diego.

City Heights now has the highest food stamp redemption rate of any farmers market in the nation, Mei said.

Since it opened, customers have spent $70,000 in CalFresh funds. Weekly CalFresh spending has grown from $75 a week to $1,000.

Organizers credit this success to Fresh Fund, an IRC program that matches what customers spend in supplemental-aid dollars. If a WIC mother comes to the market with $5, she’ll actually have $10 to spend that day. The program was recently expanded to five other San Diego markets with grant money from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
By Faduma Ahmed
City Heights Life Guest Columnist

I have experienced many things in my life, some good and some bad, but never have I had such great and amazing experiences as in the United States.

First of all, I never thought washing clothes would be so easy. Back in Somalia, we washed clothes with our bare hands. We used to feel washing clothes was grueling and painful, not to mention hanging the clothes to dry, ironing and so forth. Luckily, washing clothes in America is nothing at all, and I am very grateful for having a washing machine.

Bearing four children in Somalia was not easy. My childbirth experiences were very painful and difficult to get over. However, giving birth in America is totally different. My experience of having a baby in America consisted of casual visits to the local clinic. When I was in labor, I did not feel any pain at all and in fact, I did not even know the baby was coming out.

Before coming to America, many immigrants truly believe that it’s paradise on earth. However, I came to realize my view of America was half dream and half truth. Have you ever seen a group of people more busy than an ant kingdom? People are constantly on the move with hardly any rest. There is no family time; the only family time is sleep time.

As new Americans, a lot of East Africans, especially Somali families, have faced difficulties transitioning from a traditional land to a sophisticated, highly advanced, multifaceted country. Often at our City Heights Hope group meetings, we share some of our challenges, both the bad and good ones we have here in City Heights. We are puzzled how there is so much technology that can make life easy, but we are still juggling many activities. We wonder among ourselves, “Why does the term ‘treat’ or ‘leisure time’ exist in the U.S.?”

All of these experiences are only a few of the many amazing experiences that I have had in the U.S. I have been here for more than 15 years and must say that I have changed and assimilated in some areas. I have experienced giving birth in the U.S., which is virtually pain-free. I cannot remember the last time I washed clothes to dry, ironing and so forth. Luckily, washing clothes in America is totally different. My experience of having a baby in America is totally different. My experience of having a baby in America was not easy. Bearing four children in Somalia was not easy. I have been here for more than 15 years and must say that I have changed and assimilated in some areas. I have experienced giving birth in the U.S., which is virtually pain-free. I cannot remember the last time I washed clothes to dry, ironing and so forth.

By sharing this, I hope we will revitalize some of our old traditions that are helpful and healthful. There are many things America has to offer newcomers, and there are many great things that refugees and immigrants can offer to those born in America.

— Faduma Ahmed, City Heights resident

**From Somalia to America: 15 years later**

**Imaanshahaygii Maraykanka**

“Hi magacayo waxaa la yihiin waxaad qaatay Fadumo Ahmed. Waxaan waaayo-arag oo suuradaa waxa la hayo noqday waxay ugu saabsan. Waxaana la helo duur ugu horeysay isku shaqaynayaa inaan la dhiid ahayn kariimka ciyaaraha. Haseayshe, waxaa magacday in ay tahay waxaad ku caanahay haddii aad u baahan tahay laaga xumada ahaan oo ahayd xanuuna ah; Yaqaad, waxa uu u qaadi karaan aqoonsan iyo arrimaha ugu baahan ah.

By sharing this, I hope we will revitalize some of our old traditions that are helpful and healthful. There are many things America has to offer newcomers, and there are many great things that refugees and immigrants can offer to those born in America.

— Faduma Ahmed, City Heights resident

**Hi magacayo waxaa la yihiin waxaad qaatay Fadumo Ahmed. Waxaan waaayo-arag oo suuradaa:**

“Maxay sababta waqtiga raaxa-dii ah: "Yari oo ay laga xumada xanuuna ah ayaa ku hesho kala duwan qaarkooda. Febahariya waxay ugu saabsan, yeel ayaan ugu saabsan, jeecigaynta ugu saabsan, arrimaha ugu saabsan. Qaar ahaan wuxuu uu sheegayntaa haddii aad u baahan tahay laaga xumada ahaan oo ahayd xanuuna ah.”

— Faduma Ahmed, City Heights resident

**Imaanshahaygii Maraykanka**

**Submissions**

City Heights Life publishes monthly. Please submit letters, photos, events, articles or story ideas to editor@cityheightslife.com.

**Editor**

Helen Gao
editor@cityheightslife.com

**Art Director**

Claire Harlin
editor@cityheightslife.com

**We want to hear from you!**

Send your letters, ideas, comments and submissions to editor@cityheightslife.com. Also, submit your photos taken in City Heights for publication consideration, as well as a chance for one of your photos to be chosen as the “Photo of the Month.”
Editor’s note: This is part of an ongoing series on community organizations that are funded by The California Endowment as part of its Building Healthy Communities initiative.

By Adam Ward
Mid-City CAN

The San Diego Organizing Project (SDOP), based in City Heights, has been seeking to raise the voices of residents in powerful ways for more than 30 years. SDOP started in 1979 and is part of a national network of faith-based organizations.

SDOP administers two major youth and health-related initiatives funded by The California Endowment, as part of the endowment’s Building Healthy Communities program.

One initiative is creating a youth development office to help government agencies coordinate and share resources and the other is establishing a model health care project that addresses safety-net populations. Both initiatives are being coordinated through the Mid-City Community Advocacy Network (Mid-City CAN).

SDOP is conducting research through community gatherings and interviews in an effort to “make sure that the voice and experience of people is heard in powerful ways,” Jose Arenas, SDOP’s executive director, said. The goal of the health care work is to increase access for at-risk groups, such as children and Medicaid recipients, through partnerships with community health centers.

“We’ve been doing a ton of work trying to figure out what the local health care delivery system is capable of,” Arenas said. But that is just the first step. “If you do create something new, could we imagine proposing something — a delivery system — that puts the voice and experience of patients first, which is kind of radical?” he said.

SDOP is also pushing to open a youth development office that connects organizations that affect the lives of young people — groups such as the San Diego Unified School District, health and human services organizations, law enforcement, libraries, and park and recreation programs. The idea for a youth office stemmed from a spike in violence about four years ago.

“Most of our services are focused on trying to intervene, but youth development would be focused on the whole kid, to create opportunities for youth and families,” Arenas said. “It’s a larger focus on prevention.”

The youth and health care initiatives have goals that go beyond the individuals they help. “The development of youth, ultimately, we believe leads to the development of community, of place,” he said. “And the whole idea behind a place-based initiative [like Building Healthy Communities] is that place matters.”

— Adam Ward is the Mid-City CAN staff writer and a former San Diego Union-Tribune editor. Adam has lived in San Diego for nearly a decade and is the father of a young son. Contact him at award@midcitycan.org or (619) 283-9624 ext. 210.

VACCINES, from P1

Where to go for Tdap shots in City Heights?

• County Public Health Center, 5202 University Ave., (619) 229-5400.
• La Maestra Community Health Centers, 4060 Fairmount Ave., (619) 280-4213.
• San Diego Family Care’s Mid-City Community Clinic (pediatrics), 4305 University Ave., (619) 280-2058.

VACUNAS, de P1

epidemia de pertusis.

El nuevo requisito se aplica a todos los estudiantes sin importar si asisten a escuelas públicas, charters o privadas o si son estudiantes actuales, nuevos o que se transfieren a una nueva escuela. La ley tiene dos fases:

- Para el año escolar 2011-12, todos los estudiantes que ingresan a los grados 7 a 12 tienen que demostrar que recibieron la vacuna de refuerzo Tdap antes que comiencen las clases. El primer día de clases del Distrito Escolar Unificado de San Diego es el 6 de septiembre.
- Después del año escolar 2012-13, la ley solo se aplicará a los estudiantes que ingresan al séptimo grado.

¿Por qué mi hijo necesita la vacuna Tdap?

La vacuna ayuda a prevenir el cierre de escuelas debido a brotes de pertusis. En muchas escuelas de California se han presentado casos de pertusis. Algunos estudiantes necesitan atención especial provocando que sus padres falten al trabajo y pierdan parte de su salario para poder cuidarlos.

El pasado California vivió la peor epidemia de pertusis de los últimos cincuenta años. Unos 9,900 casos fueron reportados a lo largo del estado. Solo en el Condado de San Diego se registraron 1,150 casos, incluyendo la muerte de dos bebés.

¿Qué es Tdap?

Tdap es una vacuna de refuerzo para niños, adolescentes y adultos. Protege de forma segura contra tres peligrosas enfermedades:

- Tetanos, que produce una grave y dolorosa rigidez muscular, incluyendo los músculos de la quemada que produce dificultad para tragar y respirar.
- Difteria, infección en la garganta que puede producir problemas respiratorios, parálisis, insuficiencia cardíaca y la muerte.
- Pertusis, que se manifiesta como violentos ataque de tos que hacen que respirar sea difícil.

Se contagia fácilmente a través de la tos o los estornudos de la persona afectada. Los síntomas pueden durar varios meses. La tos ferina puede ser fatal en infantes y niños pequeños.

¿Dónde puedo vacunar a mi hijo?

Los niños deben acudir a su médico de cabecera para recibir la vacuna Tdap lo más pronto posible para evitar las pistas de último minuto y que les nieguen la entrada a la escuela el primer día de clases en septiembre por no tener el comprobante de la inmunización.

El programa subvencionado por el gobierno "Vacunas para Ninos (VFC)" ofrece inmunizaciones gratuitas o de bajo costo a los niños menores de 18 años que califican. Puede contactar a los Centros Comunitarios de Salud La Maestra, a la Clinica Familiar Comunitaria Mid-City de San Diego (pediatría) y al Centro de Salud de la Región Central de la Agencia de Servicios Humanos del condado, estos centros tienen la vacuna Tdap disponible a bajo o ningún costo para las personas que no tienen seguro médico o que forman parte de Medi-Cal.

La Maestra, San Diego Family Care, el Distrito Escolar Unificado de San Diego y la Agencia de Servicios Humanos del condado estarán ofreciendo clínicas públicas de Tdap en el Centro de Salud y Bienestar de Central Elementar School este verano para inten tar que los niños de City Heights sean inmunizados antes que comiencen el nuevo año escolar.

Por favor contacte a la Dra. Dorothy Zirkle de Price Charities escribiéndole a dzirkle@pricecharities.org para más detalles.

— La Dra. Dorothy Zirkle es la directora de servicios de salud para la Agencia de Vacunas para Niños de San Diego Family Care, la Clínica Familiar Comunitaria Mid-City de San Diego, San Diego Family Care’s Mid-City Community Clinic (pediatrics), and the San Diego Unified School District. Check with La Maestra Community Health Centers, San Diego Family Care’s Mid-City Community Clinic (pediatrics), and the county Health and Human Services Agency are working on holding open Tdap clinics at Central Elementary School’s Health and Wellness Center this summer in an effort to get City Heights children immunized prior to the start of the new school year.

Please inquire with Dr. Dorothy Zirkle at Price Charities by emailing dzirkle@pricecharities.org for further details.

— Dr. Dorothy Zirkle is the director of health services at Price Charities, which is dedicated to improving the quality of life in City Heights.
Residents have rare chance to redraw political boundaries

Redistricting effort can lead to big change for City Heights

By Helen Gao
City Heights Life

City Heights is at the heart of competing proposals to redraw San Diego’s political boundaries, and depending on how the city’s redistricting process shakes out, residents here may find themselves voting in a new district or being represented by a new council member.

To ensure fair representation, the political landscape is realigned every ten years at the local, state and federal levels based on new demographic data released by the U.S. Census Bureau and input from residents. Over the summer, a reconfigured map for City Council elections is expected to be finalized.

The stakes are high: the new map will affect who is eligible to vote in over the next decade.

The outcome of redistricting can dramatically reshape the balance of power between various interests and influence the policy direction on everything from water and sewer rates to funding for parks and libraries. Every voter has a stake in the outcome of redistricting because the process is intended to ensure that everyone’s vote counts equally.

Anisha Dalal, who chairs the city’s Redistricting Commission, said that in drawing political boundaries, a key consideration is ensuring that communities of interest, which share a common way of life, are kept together. To figure out what those communities are, she said the commission needs to hear from residents.

“It’s so important for [residents] to help us commissioners understand what is important to them in their neighborhoods and their communities and to give us ideas on how to best combine different neighborhoods into districts,” Dalal said.

The city’s redistricting effort carries extra significance this year because for the first time since the 1990s, a new council district will be carved out, in order to comply with Proposition D approved by city voters in June 2010. Populations will have to be shifted from the existing eight districts in order to create the ninth district, so some residents may find themselves voting in a new district in the future.

The city’s seven-member Redistricting Commission has the sole authority to adopt a new map. The commissioners are city residents selected by a panel of two retired judges, partly for their ability to represent the city’s diversity. One of the commissioners is Theresa Quirroz, a City Heights community activist.

Public participation

By law, the redistricting process must involve extensive public outreach. The city’s Redistricting Commission has been holding public hearings and meetings for months. It has also translated materials into Spanish, Tagalog and Vietnamese.

In July, the commission plans to release a preliminary map and hold a series of public hearings on it.

Based on the feedback, changes may be made. The commission’s goal is to finalize the map in August.

So far, community groups, such as the Latino Redistricting Committee and the San Diego County Taxpayers Association, have submitted a dozen redistricting proposals for the commission to consider.

Meanwhile, the public is encouraged to send in comments by phone or email and to attend commission meetings.

Population shifts make redistricting necessary

One of the key reasons for redistricting is to best combine different neighborhoods into districts.

Asians accounted for much of the growth. Overall, Hispanics and Asians accounted for much of the growth. Overall, Hispanics comprised 28.8 percent of the city’s residents in 2010, up from 25.4 percent in 2000. Asians made up 15.9 percent of the city’s population in 2010, up from 13.6 percent in 2000. Meanwhile, the number of blacks and non-Hispanic whites declined.

Therefore, boundaries have to be adjusted to take into account the changes. Between 2000 and 2010, the city’s population grew by 6.9 percent to 1,307,402 and became even more diverse. Hispanics and Asians accounted for much of the growth. Overall, Hispanics comprised 28.8 percent of the city’s residents in 2010, up from 25.4 percent in 2000. Asians made up 15.9 percent of the city’s population in 2010, up from 13.6 percent in 2000. Meanwhile, the number of blacks and non-Hispanic whites declined.

San Diego’s population grew and became even more diverse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City of San Diego</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Black/African American</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Hispanic/Latino</th>
<th>Non-Hispanic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000 Census</td>
<td>1,223,400</td>
<td>166,968</td>
<td>96,216</td>
<td>736,207</td>
<td>310,752</td>
<td>912,618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 Census</td>
<td>1,307,402</td>
<td>207,944</td>
<td>87,949</td>
<td>769,971</td>
<td>376,020</td>
<td>931,382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Change</td>
<td>6.9 %</td>
<td>25 %</td>
<td>-8.6 %</td>
<td>4.6 %</td>
<td>21 %</td>
<td>2.1 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Over the past decade, the city’s population increased by 6.9 percent. The fastest growing groups were Hispanics and Asians.

How to give input on redistricting

City of San Diego Redistricting Commission
Website: www.sandiego.gov/redistricting
Email: redistricting_2010@sandiego.gov
Phone: (619) 533-3060

The black and non-Hispanic white populations in the City of San Diego shrank over the past decade, while the Hispanic white and Asian populations grew.
Trojan Avenue gets extreme makeover

The street is clean, sidewalks are landscaped, and homes are freshly painted on the 5300 block of Trojan Avenue, thanks to the Summer 2011 FaceLift. The semiannual event attracted more than 700 volunteers – about half from City Heights – to the Colina Park neighborhood on June 11. Teams removed trash, painted 12 homes, built three fences, landscaped parkways, and painted every iron fence on the block.

The project was organized by the FaceLift Committee and City Heights resident Linda Pennington with the assistance of Community HousingWorks. Materials were provided by grants from the City Heights Project Area Committee, nonprofits, and businesses. Homeowners helped by the project were low-income, disabled, or elderly, and they participated during FaceLift to the best of their ability.

The Chen family received an extra special surprise during FaceLift. Wells Fargo paid for the Cambodian family of nine to receive all new appliances. Ms. Chen said through an interpreter that she was so thankful and happy and felt like “she was on ‘Extreme Makeover: Home Edition.’”

Above: During the Summer 2011 FaceLift, a Cambodian family of nine, the Chens, received all new appliances paid for by Wells Fargo.

About 700 volunteers of all ages participated in the Summer 2011 FaceLift.
To access it, all you need is a library card

By Helen Gao
City Heights Life

Children often turn to their parents for help when they struggle with school assignments. What if their parents don’t have the time or knowledge to assist them? Students who find themselves in a bind can take advantage of free, online homework help offered by the San Diego Public Library. The HelpNow! program is available 1 p.m. to 10 p.m. daily to anybody with a library card. The one-on-one service connects students in kindergarten through college, as well as adult learners, with tutors who are experts in math, science, English and social studies. Spanish-speaking tutors are available.

Students can access the service from their home computer or any library computer via the Internet at www.sandiego.gov/public-library/services/hwcenter.shtml. To use the service, all they have to do is enter their library card number.

Tutors and students interact via live chat. Tutors can demonstrate problem-solving using a virtual whiteboard. Besides homework help, they can give feedback on essays and resumes. All tutors have four-year college degrees and have taken a proficiency test to determine their expertise in a particular subject area and their ability to convey ideas clearly in an online environment. To ensure student safety, all tutors have undergone criminal background checks.

HelpNow! is created by Brainfuse, an education company founded in 1999. Brainfuse provides homework help programs to libraries nationwide.

Get free homework help is easy
To connect with college-educated tutors in math, science, English and social studies, visit www.sandiego.gov/public-library/services/hwcenter.shtml. The free service is available 1 p.m. to 10 p.m. daily.

Free online homework help
Ayuda gratuita en línea para las Tareas Escolares

SCHOOL

To access it, all you need is a library card

By Helen Gao
City Heights Life

Children often turn to their parents for help when they struggle with school assignments. What if their parents don’t have the time or knowledge to assist them? Students who find themselves in a bind can take advantage of free, online homework help offered by the San Diego Public Library. The HelpNow! program is available 1 p.m. to 10 p.m. daily to anybody with a library card. The one-on-one service connects students in kindergarten through college, as well as adult learners, with tutors who are experts in math, science, English and social studies. Spanish-speaking tutors are available.

Students can access the service from their home computer or any library computer via the Internet at www.sandiego.gov/public-library/services/hwcenter.shtml. To use the service, all they have to do is enter their library card number.

Tutors and students interact via live chat. Tutors can demonstrate problem-solving using a virtual whiteboard. Besides homework help, they can give feedback on essays and resumes. All tutors have four-year college degrees and have taken a proficiency test to determine their expertise in a particular subject area and their ability to convey ideas clearly in an online environment. To ensure student safety, all tutors have undergone criminal background checks.

HelpNow! is created by Brainfuse, an education company founded in 1999. Brainfuse provides homework help programs to libraries nationwide.

Get free homework help is easy
To connect with college-educated tutors in math, science, English and social studies, visit www.sandiego.gov/public-library/services/hwcenter.shtml. The free service is available 1 p.m. to 10 p.m. daily.
Vietnamese family brings Chinese herbs to City Heights

Tam Ly and his sister-in-law Ms. Ly (who asked to be identified only by her last name) can remember boarding a small boat in 1980 to flee communist rule in Vietnam. Two of their younger family members were killed in the rough seas. Eventually the Ly family was accepted for political asylum in the United States and located by the government to City Heights.

They brought with them the knowledge of four generations of herbalists in the Ly family. Herbs have been an important part of Chinese culture for thousands of years and are used to treat a variety of maladies. These traditions were passed to the Vietnamese through hundreds of years of Chinese occupation and international trade.

The Ly family’s first business was a bakery, opened on El Cajon Boulevard in 1983, which still stands today. Encouraged by its success, the Ly’s opened Xuan Sanh Dong Chinese Herb & Tea next door. Loosely translated, the name of the store means “Spring Born Again.” It is modeled after the shop they owned in Vietnam. A bank of authentic wood drawers holds hundreds of herbal remedies. Tam even uses a Chinese abacus, an ancient calculation tool, to balance the books at the close of each business day.

All products are purchased through wholesalers in the United States with many containing both English and Chinese instructions. Tam said most of his customers are Vietnamese and Chinese immigrants, but he does serve customers of all backgrounds. They come seeking remedies for all sorts of issues: to help them sleep better, develop healthier skin and hair, and relieve illnesses.

He said he discovered four doctors used in herbal remedies. They are used to treat a variety of illnesses. These traditions were passed to the Vietnamese through hundreds of years of Chinese occupation and international trade.

Most businesses need the following:

- Deposit processing
- Letters of credit
- Lock boxes
- Borrowing
- Cash management
- Check writing
- Credit and debit card processing

Your business is unique, so choose a bank that best suits your particular needs. Contact other business owners in City Heights and find out where they choose their bank, and if they are happy with it. Then make a list of the financial institutions that you wish to meet with and set up appointments. Make sure you ask to meet with the banking representative that you would actually work with if you selected that bank.

Go to the meetings with a list of questions prepared in advance. The list should include the following:

- Does the bank have a special department for business customers?
- Does the bank provide services you are interested in and what does it charge for the services?
- How do the online banking services work? Ask for a demonstration.
- Does the bank offer special incentives or discounts to its new customers?
- Can the banking representative come visit your business to better understand your needs, including your future borrowing needs?
- Can the bank provide references from other businesses that use its services?

You should meet with at least three different banks. Once you have finished all of your meetings and checked references, make the decision. Be sure to continue meeting with your banking representative at least every few months to inform your banker of any new needs or service problems.

— Staff report
Community HousingWorks helps struggling homeowners avoid foreclosure

By Krista Culhane
Community HousingWorks

Community HousingWorks (CHW), a nonprofit organization with offices in City Heights and Escondido, offers counseling and coaching services to homeowners struggling to meet their mortgage debt obligations. CHW’s Foreclosure Intervention Center addresses the needs of these borrowers with a comprehensive line of counseling services, referrals to additional resources, and educational workshops designed specifically to help prevent foreclosure.

Homeowners seeking counseling receive one-on-one help resulting in an action plan that may include referrals to outside service providers for pre-bankruptcy counseling, tax assistance, legal remedies, and financial assistance programs. After an initial coaching session and once CHW has received a complete package of information from a client, the staff uploads the data using national technology platforms that have been created for agencies like CHW around the country. If the action plan calls for a loan modification or forbearance, loss mitigation specialists will act as advocates to assist the borrower in modifying his mortgage. All services of the Foreclosure Intervention Center are free, with the exception of the costs related to a credit report, in-house copies, or a Distressed Neighborhood Report.

Many options exist for financially-strapped homeowners. Each bank has its own program and eligibility criteria. The federal government also assists those who qualify. The most recent program available to struggling homeowners in California is called “Keep Your Home California.” This $2 billion program provides assistance to low- or moderate-income families going through financial hardships, such as unemployment or temporary medical disability.

Since 2007, when CHW began helping struggling homeowners retain their homes, 95 percent of all homeowners who received loan modifications have continued to make their mortgage payments on time and are still living in their home. As a result of its success, CHW has been featured in a Freddie Mac publication series called “Best Practices in Foreclosure Intervention Counseling.” The agency’s team of certified counselors also has won other recognitions: the 2010 Distinguished Organization award from the San Diego County Bar Association and a first place award for “Advocacy, Social Change, and Diversity Planning” from the San Diego section of the American Planning Association.

Community HousingWorks’ City Heights office is located at 4305 University Ave., Suite 550. For more information, call (619) 282-6647 or visit www.chworks.org.

— Krista Culhane is the public relations and marketing manager for Community HousingWorks.
When I think of celebrating July 4, the first thing that comes to mind is also one of the things I hold close to my heart – fireworks. As a City Heights resident, on Independence Day, you are sure to hear fireworks in the distance, typically coming from Qualcomm Stadium. Sadly in City Heights, we do not get to experience such a celebration close to home. It was not always so.

On July 4, 1913, City Heights celebrated its first July 4 as an incorporated city known as East San Diego. Unlike today’s quiet streets and lack of local fireworks, City Heights was known then to celebrate Independence Day without holding back. American flags were hung everywhere, in store windows and on street lamps and homes, to demonstrate patriotism. Thousands were expected to attend the City Heights Fourth of July festival. Apartments and rooming houses were filled with visitors anxious to partake in the festivities.

At 8:30 in the morning, the first event of the celebration took place – street races held on University and Fairmount avenues. These street races were not just ordinary races. There were automobile, motorcycle, bicycle, horse, and even wheelbarrow and sack races. Winners received various prizes, such as motor oil, tires, or cash purses. After the races, visitors could look forward to a six-round boxing bout or a wrestling match. If boxing did not suit their fancy, they could attend the street carnival or enter the costume contest in hopes of winning a cash prize. In addition to these attractions, there was the grand mask ball at Fairmount Hall. Of course, no July 4 celebration would be complete without fireworks, which were set off on Fairmount Avenue and could be seen from anywhere in City Heights.

“How we celebrate July 4 today here in City Heights may have changed, but the change has occurred not just in our neighborhood. A broader shift in American culture has taken place.”

JON LUNA
City Heights native

“How we celebrate July 4 today here in City Heights may have changed, but the change has occurred not just in our neighborhood. A broader shift in American culture has taken place.”

— Jon Luna is a first-generation Filipino-American who was raised in City Heights. A San Diego State University graduate, he still lives there and works regularly as a substitute teacher at Hoover High School and other City Heights public schools. He is also pursuing a master’s degree in history from the University of San Diego.