Bringing immunity to the community
By Amanda Larse

The health center at Rosa Parks Elementary School got some extra helping hands this past fall from San Diego State University nursing students. As part of their community health clinical rotation, they set up and ran a flu clinic every Friday for Rosa Parks students and their families.

Working at the clinic gave SDSU students the opportunity not only to practice their nursing skills, but also to help promote health and wellness in City Heights.

Educational success starts with a healthy child who is able to attend school, and research has shown that children are the primary transmitters of the flu. Vaccinating children for the flu makes their families and the entire community healthier as a whole.

All of the children and family members who lacked insurance or had Medi-Cal were able to receive the vaccine free of charge. Furthermore, the student nurses put an emphasis on vaccinating high-risk populations, such as those with asthma. Overall, 75 percent of the children with asthma at Rosa Parks received their flu shot at the clinic and a total of 408 flu shots were given to the children and surrounding community.

— Amanda Larse is a San Diego State University nursing student and worked at the Rosa Parks Health Clinic as part of her school training.
Ollie, from P1

selfish teammate, off the court a gentleman and a class act,” Goulston says. Those are not just hollow words. Goulston has dismissed three players in eight years who were either all-state or all-county players because they didn’t want to represent the school the right way.

The first year of his tenure he had four returning starters from a team that had won only six games the year before. He kicked three of them off the team, including the county’s leading scorer, because they couldn’t adapt to Goulston’s demanding style. The team started from scratch with two freshmen and a sophomore.

What initially looked like a dire situation turned quickly into a “hidden gem.”

Two years later, the team won the city championship and made it to the Elite Eight of the California high school basketball tournament. Since then, they have won two more city titles and been runner-up the past two seasons.

Asked how he turned the program around, Goulston says “the key to all of this is a foundation of discipline.” That discipline extends beyond the hardwood floor of Hoover’s 80-year-old gym.

Before he arrived, Goulston says many of the players were not attending class, getting into trouble, and otherwise not taking academics seriously so he immediately implemented a new system that required all players with a grade point average under a 3.0 to attend study hall (which now includes all freshmen, regardless of their GPA). The results have been staggering.

Of Goulston’s 28 graduating seniors, 27 have moved on to college and continued their athletic careers. Eighteen of those seniors have received scholarships to four-year universities. Goulston says these are the numbers he wants his program to be known by.

“I want our program to be judged not by wins and losses but more what they are doing when they are 25 (years old),” Goulston says.

There are signs that public perception of Hoover has become more favorable. Goulston says Hoover used to be a school kids bused away from but now more are staying and some are even coming from other places. They are discovering what Goulston knew before taking the head coaching job, that Hoover was a “hidden gem.”

Before he accepted the job he had built a successful traveling basketball program in Logans Heights coupled with a nonprofit mentorship, leadership, academic program he founded at the Stockton Recreation Center. While working in Logans Heights, he had admired Hoover’s facilities, administrative support and ambience, which he believed was largely untapped.

Goulston is currently the director of development at Hoover, where he does fundraising, connects with alumni, and works with Cardinals Connect (a program that connects at-risk students with services). He is involved with the Rising Stars Charitable Foundation and coaching his ninth Hoover team in the San Diego CIF playoffs (ranked third in the county).

— Staff report

Raising A Reader llegará a las escuelas de City Heights

Por Helen Gao

City Heights Life

Muchos padres de familia de City Heights no saben lo importante que es pasar tiempo todos los días acurrucados con sus hijos leyendo un libro. Adquirir una rutina de alfabetización en casa puede literalmente tener un gran impacto en la vida de los niños.

Diversos estudios han demostrado que las oportunidades que tienen los niños para aprender a leer en casa disminuyen si no saben leer cuando llegan al tercer grado. Los niños que tienen problemas para leer, son más propensos a abandonar los estudios, no terminar la secundaria, no terminar la universidad, no encontrar empleo, tener un gran impacto en la vida de los niños.

Una de las metas de la Alianza es asegurarse de que los niños reciban el apoyo necesario, dentro y fuera de la escuela, para que puedan leer de forma competente al llegar al tercer grado. Otro de sus objetivos es promover estrategias basadas en evidencias para aumentar la alfabetización.

La Alianza tiene como meta llegar a 200 salones de kinder en 100 escuelas en San Diego e Imperial. Unos 8,500 Masones, pertenecen a 27 logias en los condados de California. Los Masones serán los anfitriones de un evento comunitario que se celebrará en Central Elementary el 26 de marzo para inaugurar el Mes de las Escuelas Públicas de San Diego, uno de los seis consejos establecido en California por la Fundación Masónica de California. Unos 8,500 Masones pertenecen a 27 logias en los condados de San Diego e Imperial.
Edison Elementary School is nominated for the prestigious Blue Ribbon award

By Helen Gao
City Heights Life

Si Thomas Edison viviera hoy, el gran inventor norteamericano estaría orgulloso de su escuela del mismo nombre en City Heights. Escuela Primaria Edison fue nominada recientemente por el Departamento de Educación de California para la National Blue Ribbon Schools Program, que reconoce la excelencia académica. Fue uno de los tres colegios en San Diego elegidos para el prestigioso honor.

Edison fue seleccionado como candidato debido a la notable mejora que ha hecho en los últimos años. Apenas hace unos años, la escuela estaba en “la mejora del programa”, una designación federal que significa que el logro del estudiante se estaba quedando. Hoy en día, Edison tiene una puntuación de 836 en el Índice de Rendimiento Académico de California, que lo coloca en los niveles más altos en todo el estado.

El logro de Edison es especialmente destacable teniendo en cuenta sus características demográficas. Todos sus estudiantes provienen de familias de bajos ingresos y calificar para recibir comidas escolares gratuita, con poco o precio reducido. Tres cuartas partes de los estudiantes están aprendiendo inglés. Menos de la mitad de los estudiantes provienen de familias donde los padres han completado la escuela secundaria.

Edison principal Tavga Bustani dijo que la nominación de la escuela azul es el resultado de la intensa atención de su personal en la mejora continua. Grado-nivel de alfabetización y los equipos de las matemáticas se reúnen cada dos semanas para coordinar la instrucción, y discutir el progreso del estudiante. Rendimiento de

Evaluación de lesiones nivel de alta y mediana para los jugadores de la escuela azul.

A girl reads at Edison Elementary, where Principal Tavga Bustani credits her school’s success to an intense focus on continuous improvement. Student performance is closely monitored so those who are struggling get help right away. Courtesy photo

“On a two-week cycle, we don’t let kids fall under the radar,” Bustani said, adding that all the strategies used at Edison are research-based. Due to the large population of English learners at Edison, all teachers there provide systematic English language development for 30 minutes a day as part of a 2½-hour literacy block. Students are grouped by language level according to results of standardized tests. Strategic language lessons are deployed based on these groupings.

Math instruction is just as rigorous. Teachers use hands-on experimentation with manipulatives, high-tech animation, guided practice and other strategies to explain concepts. To promote critical thinking, students are encouraged to ask open-ended questions, and they are expected to articulate how they arrive at a solution to a problem. The U.S. Department of Education is expected to announce winners of the Blue Ribbon awards in the fall. The program recognizes schools in two categories: Exemplary high-performing schools that achieve in the top 5 percentiles of the nation and exemplary improving schools, which have at least 40 percent of their students from disadvantaged backgrounds but are also in the top 10 percent of schools showing the greatest improvement over the past five years. Edison was nominated for the latter category.

In the fall, all the winning schools will be invited to Washington D.C. for a ceremony to celebrate their success and receive a plaque and flag to commemorate their achievement.

Bustani said the award nomination came as a complete surprise because her school didn’t apply for the honor. “We don’t seek out such accolades,” she said. “We always keep the students at the center of our work. We do it because we know that the work needs to be done.”

Si Thomas Edison viviera hoy, el gran inventor norteamericano estaría orgulloso de su escuela del mismo nombre en City Heights. Escuela Primaria Edison fue nominada recientemente por el Departamento de Educación de California para la National Blue Ribbon Schools Program, que reconoce la excelencia académica. Fue uno de los tres colegios en San Diego elegidos para el prestigioso honor. Edison fue seleccionado como candidato debido a la notable mejora que ha hecho en los últimos años. Apenas hace unos años, la escuela estaba en “la mejora del programa”, una designación federal que significa que el logro del estudiante se estaba quedando. Hoy en día, Edison tiene una puntuación de 836 en el Índice de Rendimiento Académico de California, que lo coloca en los niveles más altos en todo el estado. El logro de Edison es especialmente destacable teniendo en cuenta sus características demográficas. Todos sus estudiantes provienen de familias de bajos ingresos y calificar para recibir comidas escolares gratuita, con poco o precio reducido. Tres cuartas partes de los estudiantes están aprendiendo inglés. Menos de la mitad de los estudiantes provienen de familias donde los padres han completado la escuela secundaria. Edison principal Tavga Bustani dijo que la nominación de la escuela azul es el resultado de la intensa atención de su personal en la mejora continua. Grado-nivel de alfabetización y los equipos de las matemáticas se reúnen cada dos semanas para coordinar la instrucción, y discutir el progreso del estudiante. Rendimiento de
Dozens of local organizations offer free tax help

By Helen Gao
City Heights Life

Tax season is upon us, and it can be a very stressful time. Given the complexity of the tax code, filing taxes is daunting for many people, especially if English is not their first language.

But don’t fret. Several dozen local organizations offer free tax preparation assistance to the elderly and low-to moderate-income residents who have trouble filling out the forms and figuring out whether they qualify for various tax credits.

In partnership with nonprofit and community organizations throughout the country, the Internal Revenue Service offers the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and the Tax Counseling for Elderly programs (TCE).

The VITA Program
The VITA program offers free tax help to people who make $50,000 or less. IRS-certified volunteers provide free basic tax return preparation and help qualified individuals apply for special tax credits, such as the Earned Income Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit, and Credit for the Elderly or the Disabled.

Free electronic filing is available at most VITA sites.

According to 2-1-1 San Diego, a free phone and Internet resource, 31 organizations countywide provide services under the VITA program. Twenty of the 31 have offices within 10 miles of City Heights’ 92105 ZIP Code.

One local agency is Home Start. They are located at 5296 University Ave, Suite F2. Assistance is free. The office is open from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday-Friday. Appointments are available by calling (619) 283-3624.

Other VITA sites in the City Heights area include: The Alliance for African Assistance, 5952 El Cajon Blvd., (619) 286-9052 and Maximizing Access to Advance Our Communities (MAAC), 5410 Bayview Heights Place, Unit 2, (619) 426-3595 ext. 1260.

For a complete list of VITA sites in San Diego County and their hours of operation, visit 211sandiego.org. You also can dial 2-1-1 or 1-888-227-7669 to find a location near you.

TCE Program
While the TCE program has no age limits, it is geared toward helping seniors with questions about pensions and retirement issues. The IRS-certified volunteers who provide tax counseling are often retirees involved in the AARP Tax-Aide program.

There are 31 AARP Tax-Aide sites in San Diego County. For a complete list of the sites, visit 211sandiego.org. You also can dial 2-1-1 or 1-888-227-7669 to find a location near you.

Documents to bring to a VITA or TCE site
When visiting a VITA or TCE site, taxpayers should bring the following documents:

- Photo ID
- Social security cards for the taxpayer, spouse, and dependents
- Birth dates for spouse and dependents
- Wage and earning statements, such as W-2s and 1099-Rs
- Interest and dividend statements
- A copy of the prior year’s federal and state tax returns
- Bank account and routing numbers for direct deposit of tax refunds
- Daycare expense receipts and daycare provider’s identifying information
- Both spouses must be present to sign the required forms if they are filling joint returns as a married couple.

Earned Income Tax Credit
The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) provides tax breaks ranging from a few hundred dollars to several thousand dollars for working individuals and families who struggle to make ends meet.

Eligible working people without qualifying children can receive a refundable tax credit of up to $464. Those with three or more qualifying children can receive up to $5,751.

To get the credit, eligible taxpayers must file a tax return and claim the credit. For those whose EITC exceeds the amount of taxes owed, they receive a refund.

Anyone who earned less than $49,078 in 2011 is urged to see if they qualify for the credit by using the interactive EITC Assistant on IRS.gov. The EITC Assistant asks visitors to answer a series of questions to determine if they meet the criteria for the credit.

Documents de Organizaciones Locales Ofrecen Ayuda Tributaria Gratuita
Por Helen Gao
City Heights Life

La temporada de impuestos se aproxima y puede ser un periodo particularmente exigente. Debido a la complejidad del código fiscal, preparar la declaración de impuestos puede ser una tarea intimidante para muchas personas, especialmente si el inglés no es su primer idioma.

Pero no se preocupe. Varias organizaciones locales ofrecen asistencia para la preparación de las declaraciones de impuestos, así como para llenar los formularios y determinar si califican o no para los diversos créditos fiscales.

En alianza con varias organizaciones sin fines de lucro y organizaciones comunitarias del condado, el Servicio de Impuestos Internos (IRS) ofrece el programa “Asistencia Voluntaria al Contribuyente” (VITA) y los programas de “Asesoría Tributaria para Personas Mayores” (TCE).

Programa VITA
El programa VITA ofrece asistencia gratuita para la preparación de la declaración de impuestos a las personas con ingresos anuales de $50,000 o menos. Voluntarios certificados por el IRS ofrecen sus servicios para la preparación de la declaración de impuestos básica y ayudan a las personas que califican para aplicar para recibir créditos fiscales especiales, tales como el Crédito Tributario por Hijos y el Crédito Tributario Tributario por Hijos y el Crédito Tributario por Hijos y el Crédito Tributario por Hijos y el Crédito Tributario por Hijos y el Crédito Tributario por Hijos y el Crédito Tributario por Hijos y el Crédito Tributario por Hijos y el Crédito Tributario por Hijos.

Además, también ofrecen asesoramiento sobre la declaración de impuestos electrónicamente al IRS en casi todos los lugares en donde se ofrece VITA.

Programa TCE
Aunque el programa TCE no tiene límite de edad, está dirigido a las personas de la tercera edad que necesitan ayuda relacionada con pensión y jubilación. Voluntarios certificados por el IRS, quienes usualmente son jubilados que pertenecen al programa de Asistencia de Impuestos de AARP (AARP-Tax Aide), ofrecen asesoramiento tributario.

Crédito Tributario por Ingreso
El Crédito Tributario por Ingreso (EITC) ofrece exenciones tributarias que pueden ser desembolsadas a personas hasta varios miles de dólares a los trabajadores y familias que están luchando por subsistir.

Los trabajadores que califican y que no tienen hijos que elegibles, pueden recibir un crédito tributario reembolsable hasta $464. Quienes tienen tres o más hijos elegibles, pueden recibir hasta $5,751.

Para aplicar para este crédito, los contribuyentes deben presentar su declaración de impuestos en la oficina más cercana.

Es importante que quienes hayan ganado menos de $49,078 en el 2011, verifiquen si califican para recibir el crédito a través del Asistente Interactivo de EITC que aparece en IRS.gov. El Asistente de EITC le pedirá que responda a una serie de preguntas para determinar si reúne los requisitos para el crédito.
Imagine witnessing the torture and killing of a parent or close relative, then having to flee your homeland, move to a foreign country and go to school to try to make something of yourself. Many Karen students at the Crawford High Educational Complex have to do just that. These students and their families escaped a brutal military regime in Burma, a Southeast Asian country also known as Myanmar. They are an ethnic group that makes up a small percentage of the country. As recently as 2010, news organizations like the BBC reported that the Burmese military engaged in ethnic cleansing. After having survived these traumatic experiences, studying for algebra might seem, well, insignificant.

The School Attendance Momentum Team sponsored by The Mid-City Community Advocacy Network (Mid-City CAN) is helping about 10 Karen students adjust and complete their high school education. They are among 100 Karen students at Crawford. Carolyn Smyth, the team’s co-chair and youth department program manager at the International Rescue Committee, and representatives from several other groups have led the effort. The other groups include the Karen Organization of San Diego, SAY San Diego’s Dad’s Club, The Union of Pan Asian Communities, and Building Healthy Communities’ AmeriCorps members. The groups’ focus on truancy at Crawford started in October.

For Karen teenagers, school can be daunting. “At the New Arrival Center (at Crawford), we get kids who are at zero,” said Gwen Osgard, an English-as-a-second-language teacher. “They don’t have any English, but maybe they haven’t even been to school.” She often witnesses a frustrating pattern where students leave the New Arrival Center and struggle in regular classes. “They begin to feel very unsuccessful very quickly,” she said.

That is what she believes happened to the group of Karen boys who hasn’t been coming to school. “The first week of school, [one of them] came to me and said, ‘I feel really sad. I just want to sleep all the time.’” Osgard said. “He didn’t have the word for depressed, but the first week of school he was depressed because he felt like such a failure.”

As with many high school students, the idea of working hard for four years to graduate and eventually land a job can be a tough sell, Smyth said. Sometimes the temptation to do something illegal and earn a quick buck is difficult to resist. “They are hungry now,” she said. “They need money, now, to feed their families.”

As with many high school students, the idea of working hard for four years to graduate and eventually land a job can be a tough sell, Smyth said. Sometimes the temptation to do something illegal and earn a quick buck is difficult to resist. “They are hungry now,” she said. “They need money, now, to feed their families.”

Not having parents to model how getting a degree pays off in the end is also a challenge. “Their parents come from preliterate society,” Smyth said. “Their English skills are progressing even slower than their kids’ are.”

Earlier in the year, fighting on campus was a problem. Other students singled out the Karen boys for fights. Those boys “just feels unsafe and out of place in so many ways,” Osgard said.

Despite these challenges, the School Attendance Momentum Team reports that two of the Karen boys with truancy issues have started attending school again and they are about to have their first graduation. Eh Eh Wha will be the first Karen student to get her diploma from Crawford this year. — 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.
LEER, from P5

noted that there is startling data on the link between vocabulary exposure and poverty levels. One study found that a child from an upper middle-class, professional family will have heard 45 million words by four years old, compared to 26 million words for a working-class child and 13 million words for a child living in poverty. More than 99 percent of the children who attend Central are poor enough to qualify for subsidized school meals, and 85 percent are English learners.

“We believe that our families are our partners in their child’s education and can help close this gap through the systematic approach used by Raising a Reader,” Marten said.

On average, RAR exposes children to more than 100 books through the duration of its program, which averages 26 to 30 weeks. Depending on a school’s demographics, culturally-relevant books are made available in multiple languages. “Whatever the language of the families in City Heights, we will tailor the ordering of the books so they can get books in their home languages,” said Holly Kreider, RAR’s director of programs.

Kreider wants parents to know that even if they don’t speak English or they speak English with an accent, it’s still important for them to share books with their children on a regular basis. She notes that the books selected for the program are wonderfully illustrated so regardless of a parent’s reading level, he or she can still have fun with storytelling. “The book just becomes the launching pad for great parent-child bonding time,” Kreider said.

At the end of a full rotation of books, families are informed about resources at their local public libraries, and children are provided with a blue book bag so they can continue to be lifelong learners.

RAR’s expansion to City Heights is made possible by the California Masonic Foundation. The foundation is raising money to bring the program to 200 kindergarten classrooms statewide, with the goal of touching the lives of thousands of at-risk children.

“Throughout the United States, Masonry has been deeply involved in public education since the colonial times. In some parts of the country, the first public schools were funded by Masons,” said Randy Brill, who chairs the San Diego Public Schools Advisory Council, one of six such councils established by the California Masonic Foundation. About 8,500 Masons belong to 27 lodges in San Diego and Imperial counties.

The Masons will host a community event at Central Elementary on March 26 to kick off their organization’s “Public Schools Month,” demonstrating their support for public education by highlighting RAR.

To launch the program in City Heights, RAR has been working closely with Price Charities, a leading sponsor of The City Heights Partnership for Children. RAR’s mission meshes closely with the Partnership’s. One of the Partnership’s goals is to ensure that children are supported in and out of school to achieve third-grade literacy proficiency. Another is to promote the use of evidence-based strategies to raise achievement.

Scores of independent evaluations of RAR have shown that the program has resulted in families spending significantly more time together reading and children making academic strides.

District Area Superintendent Mitzi Merino said RAR will complement existing efforts to raise early literacy. Schools throughout the district already emphasize the importance of shared reading by having teachers model the behavior in class.

“The problem is that many families lack high quality literature or proper training to effectively support their young readers at home,” Merino said. “Books are expensive and training opportunities are limited. Raising a Reader will help many of our families develop a love of reading together and establish valuable literacy routines.”

Raising A Reader operates in 30 states nationwide, serving more than 116,000 children. To learn more about the organization, visit www.raisingareader.org.

For more information about the Masons of California and the California Masonic Foundation’s philanthropic initiatives, visit www.freemason.org.
Students and their families celebrate The Ocean Discovery Institute's honor of receiving the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring. Photo courtesy of The Ocean Discovery Institute

By Elizabeth Horpedahl
Ocean Discovery Institute

In January, scores of City Heights residents and San Diegans came together at two community events to celebrate The Ocean Discovery Institute for receiving the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring. The celebrations came after a White House ceremony in December, where Ocean Discovery students accepted the prestigious honor on behalf of the nonprofit organization from President Barack Obama. The first celebration took place on Jan. 7 at the entrance to Manzanita Canyon in City Heights. The event drew more than 100 students and their families, along with other community members, and featured music, homemade tamales, and fun activities. Students explored science career opportunities and drove remotely-operated vehicles. They posed for photos with a cardboard cutout of President Obama and took home replicas of the award. San Diego Councilwoman Marti Emerald addressed the community's achievements and praised the students for their accomplishments.

The celebration continued on Jan. 31, bringing together more than 150 business, scientific, and philanthropic leaders from San Diego. This event filled the Scripps Seaside Forum Auditorium in La Jolla and recognized the first-ever award of its kind for the region. Attendees included basketball star Bill Walton, famed oceanographer Walter Munk, Port Commissioner Scott Peters and representatives from event sponsors Life Technologies, Bank of America, and Qualcomm. San Diego Mayor Jerry Sanders gave the opening remarks. “I can’t think of a better investment in terms of giving dollars that are going to return over and over and over again,” he said. “We have 100 percent of these kids going to college!”

Founded in 1999 and focused exclusively on City Heights, The Ocean Discovery Institute is dedicated to cultivating the next generation of conservation, environmental, and science leaders. Perhaps the most exciting part of the La Jolla celebration was when the audience heard the journey of two students chosen to represent Ocean Discovery at the White House ceremony. Anai Novoa, a senior and aquatic biology major at UC Santa Barbara, and Ulisses Barraza, a junior and chemical engineering major at UCLA, are just two examples of the many Ocean Leaders who have overcome barriers, stayed committed, and are now pursuing careers in science and conservation.

“Every experience I’ve had with Ocean Discovery, I grew personally and intellectually. These experiences not only provided me with valuable skills but gave me the confidence to apply to Ph.D programs,” Anai said.

The Ocean Discovery Institute believes in empowering young people and offering opportunities for students to see their full potential, which enables them to believe in themselves. By providing science education to one of the greatest untapped talent pools, Ocean Discovery’s model has produced significant outcomes, including increases in science test scores, college attendance, and the pursuit of science and conservation degrees.

Ocean Discovery is grateful to the community of City Heights for sharing in this belief over the past 12 years and looks forward to the next 12 years as our young people become the next generation of scientific and environmental leaders.

“While receiving [the Presidential Award] was incredibly inspiring, I am equally inspired when I hear our students describe their research, see our teachers take on new challenges in the classroom, and continue to receive generous support from our donors even during these difficult economic times,” Shara Fisler, Ocean Discovery’s executive director, said.

— Elizabeth Horpedahl is the communications director for The Ocean Discovery Institute based in City Heights.

Above: Shara Fisler, founder and executive director of The Ocean Discovery Institute, accepts the award from President Obama in Washington, D.C. Below: A City Heights family poses with a cardboard cutout of President Obama at the award celebration at the entrance to Manzanita Canyon. Photo courtesy of The Ocean Discovery Institute
Los residentes de City Heights promueven los huertos urbanos

Gracias a los esfuerzos de muchas personas de City Heights, los huertos urbanos son mucho más accesibles para los residentes de San Diego.

El Consejo de la Ciudad de San Diego aprobó varias modificaciones a las leyes de zonación durante su reunión del 31 de enero, permitiendo que las personas que viven en casas de una sola familia puedan autoabastecerse (es decir, que puedan vivir de la tierra). Los residentes que reúnen ciertos requisitos podrán, de ahora en adelante, tener una cantidad limitada de gallinas, cabras y abejas. Los cambios también reducen los costos y el papeleo asociados con las granjas al por menor, puestos de verduras y mercados de agricultores.

Los estudiantes de Hoover High inscritos en la clase de Sistemas de Información Geográfica (GIS) de Bryan Voeltner, testificaron ante el Consejo de la Ciudad utilizando información y mapas de su creación para demostrar los efectos de las nuevas leyes. Muchas personas de City Heights también testificaron acerca de los méritos de los huertos urbanos, los cuales hacen que las hortalizas frescas sean más accesibles y aumentan la autosuficiencia.

La necesidad de hacer que estas regulaciones fueran menos estrictas comenzaron a ser palpable hace algunos años gracias a los esfuerzos del Comité Internacional de Rescate, quien ayudó a los residentes a instalar y operar la Granja Comunitaria New Roots en un lote baldío de City Heights. La organización, dedicada a ayudar a los refugiados, tuvo que enfrentarse a varios obstáculos burocráticos para poder establecer la Granja.

El éxito de la granja atrajo la atención de la Primera Dama Michelle Obama quien visitó el huerto. Su visita y la cobertura de los medios de comunicación nacionales, promovió la creación de nuevas granjas, lo que a su vez hizo que los principales funcionarios de la ciudad se dieran cuenta de que era necesario modificar las leyes de zonación para promover la agricultura urbana.

REGLAS

• Se permiten hasta cinco gallinas en la mayoría de las propiedades, la cantidad puede aumentar si los residentes cumplen con los requisitos de espacio para los gallineros.
• Hasta dos colmenas de abejas en la mayoría de las propiedades.
• Solo se permiten cabras miniatura
• Se prohíben los gallos

Para más información acerca de las nuevas regulaciones de agricultura urbana que fueron adoptadas recientemente, contacte a la Coordinadora de Desarrollo y Apoyo del Comité Internacional de Rescate, Priya Reddy escribiendo a priya.reddy@rescue.org o llamando al 619-641-7510 ext. 308.
Tortilleria had a unique beginning

Heads I win, tails you lose. A coin flip was what it came down to. Francisco and Delia Amezquita sat around the table with their two daughters, Dalia and Jeannette (otherwise known as Lily), deciding what to name their new tortilla factory. The year was 1988. The Amezquitas came to the United States from Tijuana, Mexico in the early 1960s, eventually settling in City Heights. Francisco was a painter and Delia a secretary. They wanted to own their own business and observed their neighbors traveling to Tijuana for fresh tortillas.

Despite their inexperience in the tortilla business, they felt a good tortilla factory would be a hit with the growing Latino population in City Heights and surrounding area. At first they tried to borrow money from family and friends but found no takers. The idea of a painter opening a tortilla factory may have seemed a bit too risky. Francisco and Delia bet on themselves and were able to secure funding from a local bank.

They found a suitable place on University Avenue and 35th Street and as they sat around the table, were now deciding on a name. Francisco wanted to name it after one of the three women in his life but they all resisted. As wise husbands do, Francisco didn’t push the issue with his wife so it was down to Dalia and Lily. A coin flip ensued and Dalia won, meaning the factory would be named after her little sister Lily.

Francisco hired two men to teach him how to operate the tortilla-making machines, working from midnight to 4 p.m. every day. He soon learned that having paid employees eliminated his profit margin so he took over the business and ran it himself, with a little help from family members.

Over the years Lily’s has become famous for its fresh corn tortillas, with patrons lining up before the doors open at 5:00 a.m. Lily’s uses no preservatives, which improves the taste and health benefits but doesn’t allow for grocery store sales. Many of the tortillas are purchased by local restaurants and taco shops.

Lily’s keeps its product line small, offering only corn tortillas (flour tortillas require a different machine), chips, tostadas, and masa (dough used for making corn tortillas). Three machines run 10 to 12 hours a day, producing 330 tortillas a minute or 200,000 plus tortillas a day.

Lily’s moved to its current location on University and 43rd about 20 years ago, remodeling it in 2005. The business is now managed by Dalia (Hunt) and her cousin Jose Banuelos from an office above the factory. Francisco and Delia stop by on occasion to give advice.

Both Dalia and Lily went to medical school, with Lily focusing on pediatrics and Dalia on adult medicine. Dalia practiced in City Heights community clinics as an internist before she returned to Lily’s to run the business for her aging parents.

Dalia and Jose say business has shrunk over the past five years as other tortilla factories have opened and their profit margin has shriveled as the cost of corn has risen. They have 30 people on the payroll, down from the peak years but still a valuable employer in the community. They say they will continue operating Lily’s as long as people keep lining up at the door.

— Staff report
A Hoover Cardinal recognized by NBC San Diego as “Student of the Month”

By Ashley Quintero  
Hoover High School

On Jan. 17, the media spotlight shone on Hoover High senior Brittany Black Jones. A classroom of excited students watched as NBC San Diego and a representative from the San Diego County Office of Education named Brittany “Student of the Month.”

“Brittany is an inspiration to other students, adults and even myself,” said Principal Dr. Charles Podhorsky, who nominated her.

Her outstanding academics and school and community involvement were the reasons why she was given the award. Brittany is in the top ten percent of her class. She is involved in multiple school activities. She is the opinion editor for the school newspaper, The Cardinal, and is part of Cardinals Interact, a program that provides social, emotional and academic support to help students reach their full potential.

Outside of school, Brittany is part of the choir at her church and its youth program, where she tutors younger students and advises them on how to get on the road to college. This has earned Brittany much respect from fellow members of her church.

In her community, she is known for other contributions as well. She writes for Urban Teen, a magazine written by teens for teens. She volunteers at her local YMCA and is a member of the transcendDANCE Youth Arts Project, whose goal is to help teens discover their own possibilities through creative self-expression.

Out of students from 250 schools in San Diego County, Brittany stood out as the choice for February’s “Student of the Month” selection. Dr. Podhorsky, her teacher Ms. Leslie Hardiman, and fellow classmates were very proud of Brittany when she was handed the award. They clapped, screamed and cheered for her, which could be heard coming from The A buildings.

Although this was supposed to be a surprise for Brittany, Ms. Hardiman could not keep it a secret and told the whole class as well as Brittany that she had won. “I’m just elated. I’m happy. I’m proud. I have seen her grow up and she has become a fine young lady. I can’t wait until she graduates and does great things,” said Ms. Hardiman.

Despite the media spotlight, Brittany remained humble. “I’m honored and speechless,” said elated Brittany.

All eyes were on her as she was interviewed by NBC reporter Rory Devine. Senior Asinn Kim was also interviewed by Devine and had nothing but praises for Brittany. Asinn talked about how Brittany helped him with filling out his college applications.

Brittany has big plans for the future and wants to become a lawyer and work for the government, specifically in the education field. She says there needs to be a change in the public school system. She feels the budget needs to change and students should be put ahead of everything.

This is the first time a Cardinal was named “Student of the Month” since NBC began awarding and featuring students for their hard work. The segment on Brittany aired the first week of February. If you missed it, you can view the segment at NBCsandiego.com.

— Ashley Quintero, class of 2012, is the editor in chief of The Cardinal at Hoover High School

City Heights Square dedicated amid a community celebration

By Albert Sarinana  
Contributor

A celebration was held Feb. 18 to dedicate the newly-finished City Heights Square, a retail, office and residential complex located on University Avenue between Fairmount Avenue and 43rd Street. The occasion brought a lot of smiles to residents in the community, many of whom expressed appreciation for a project well done.

The project was the result of a public-private partnership between the City of San Diego Redevelopment Agency and Price Charities, which has a long history of spearheading economic revitalization efforts in City Heights.

The ground floor of City Heights Square houses a 10,000 square foot Walgreens plus 11,000 square feet of commercial space. Above the commercial space are 92 apartment units that come with washers and dryers, secured underground parking, private balconies, a rooftop barbecue, and other amenities.

The dedication event featured performance by a magician, entertainment by a DJ, and catering by Super Cocina. Oluwatopeh Kupoluyi spoke on behalf of all the residents, thanking Price Charities and other parties for their hard work in getting City Heights Square built.

Many of those who attended the event were tenants in City Heights Square apartments who have fallen in love with the multicultural and family feel of the community. At the celebration, people from diverse cultures and backgrounds mingled easily with each other despite language barriers. They were surrounded by children having a good time.

Veronica and her son moved from La Jolla to City Heights Square in December. She says the cultural and family feel of the community was the deciding factor in their move. “It was the perfect place right now so far,” she said. — Albert Sarinana is studying journalism and hopes to become a science reporter upon graduation. Conveying the truth with riveting writing is the pinnacle he hopes to achieve with each and every piece.
City Heights club advocated for ‘green movement’ in 1916

By Jon Luna
City Heights Life History Columnist

Almost 100 years ago a City Heights club launched a tree planting program that inspired the mayor of San Diego to start a movement for the entire city.

In March 1916, the Progress and Prosperity Club of East San Diego developed a plan to put 400 Acacia trees along University Avenue from Boundary Street to La Mesa. The program was paid for with 50-cent donations from residents, businesses, and anyone else willing to fork over half a dollar.

Mayor E.M. Capps was so impressed he immediately called upon the City Council to institute a similar program for the city. He told the San Diego Union that trees thrive in San Diego and gave Balboa Park as an example. The Park was less than one year removed from hosting the Panama-California Exposition at the time.

Mayor Capps was quoted in the paper saying, “I hope that this movement, started by the boosters of East San Diego, will force San Diego to see the light.”

The first trees planted were christened “E.M. Capps” and “Mayor Pfahler” in honor of the mayor and president of the board of trustees for East San Diego, the original name for City Heights which was then its own incorporated city.

The San Diego Union reported the trees sold rapidly at 50 cents apiece. The Marston Company, Pacific Building Company, San Diego State Bank, United States National Bank, Simon Levy Company, and William Clayton each bought enough trees to plant an entire block. Members of the Progress and Prosperity Club of East San Diego continued planting the trees each Saturday until 400 Acacias were in place.

IN YOUR WORDS

A life devoted to teaching, education, and community activism

By Evie Kosower

I was born in New York City to Russian immigrants. In my early years, I watched kids playing in the yard of the elementary school across the street from my parents’ store. The school let me participate in a kindergarten class before I was legally enrolled, so I spent two years in kindergarten. Perhaps that’s the reason for my success in school from then on – you learn a lot in kindergarten!

When I was 12, my parents moved to Los Angeles, where I went to junior and senior high schools. Since I enjoyed school, I did well. I decided early to be a teacher. I supported myself through UC Berkeley on work-study programs and recreation department jobs. I began teaching in nursery school and private kindergarten when my two girls were young and went on to teach elementary school, Head Start, and teacher and organization in-service classes.

Along the way, I’ve held university positions at USC’s education department and the UCLA Medical School, the latter while working at a county hospital and the Veterans Administration Healthcare System (VAHS). I ended my full-time career as chief education officer for VAHS in Los Angeles. Along the way I returned twice to higher education for advanced degrees.

After joining a movement to increase excitement and creativity in learning in the 1970s, I found myself working to bring change to schools. I created successful new programs, which were dropped when the champion or money for the programs disappeared. As I became active in teacher education over the years, I noticed that similar ideas to better engage “reluctant learners” arise and disappear every 20 years or so.

My daughter, Vicki Leon, an Azalea Park resident for over 16 years, suggested that I bring my passion, excitement, and creativity to the active community here. She envisioned a tile project related to the Azalea Park Neighborhood Association (APNA) signage proposal. This project needed someone to write a grant, which I completed soon after arriving. It’s now been eight years since I moved here and I love it.

The tiles are waiting to be installed, pending the completion of the signage structure on the new median at Fairmount Avenue and Poplar Street. People of all ages and backgrounds gathered to work on the tiles. I later became the APNA rep to the City Heights Town Council for several years.

Currently, I serve on the Coordinating Council for the Mid-City Community Advocacy Network, also known as Mid-City CAN, and co-chair the Senior Momentum Team working to establish a senior center. We want space to expand our activities.

Recently, I joined Women Occupy San Diego, in which women of all ages and backgrounds support the Occupy Movement and the issues of the 99 percent. I am active in the group planning outreach to educate and engage the community. You can ask the Occupella Chorus to sing for your organization!

I believe we need to connect all groups in our communities to bring about changes in our democracy that work for us all!

— Evie Kosower is a City Heights resident.
March

17 9:15 to 9:45 a.m. City Heights Recreation Center, 4180 Landis St. Introduction to Violin Class Registration fee: $25 per session (10 weeks), Ages 5-10 Contact: Victoria Eicher (619) 442-0237

24 9 to 10 a.m. 4605 Chollas Parkway San Diego Canyonlands: Chollas Creek Habitat restoration, maintenance, and clean-up. Please bring water, sunscreen, and wear sturdy, closed-toe shoes. Contact: Jason Allen (619) 235-5262

28 4 to 6 p.m. City Heights/Weingart Library 3795 Fairmount Ave. Homework Help for Grades K-12 Contact: (619) 641-6100 Bring homework questions and local college students will help you in a fun and relaxing environment.

31 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Fairmount Avenue and Wightman Street City Heights Farmers’ Market Contact: Lorrie Scott (760) 795-2036

9 a.m. to noon City Heights/Weingart Library 3795 Fairmount Ave. Preschool Story Time Contact: (619) 641-6100 Parents and kids listen to a story and learn songs!


10 9 a.m. to noon City Heights Recreation Center 4310 Landis St. Singing and Movement Class Registration fee: $25 per session (10 weeks) Ages 5-10 Contact: Renee Calvo (619) 204-9306

12 6 to 7:30 p.m. UPAC Program Office 5348 University Ave., Suite 202 Expect Respect Group Young women ages 18-24 Contact: Cherise Young at cyoung@upacsd.com or (619) 265-2777

13 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. Mid-City Police Division 4310 Landis St. Youth Voice Leadership opportunities for youth ages 12-24

14 8 to 9 a.m. 4305 University Ave. Suite 540 City Heights Business Association Board of Directors Meeting Contact: (619) 906-4443

20 3 to 5 p.m. Azalea Recreation Center 2596 Violet St. Youth Voice Leadership opportunities for youth ages 12-24

21 7 to 8 p.m. Central Elementary School 4036 Polk Ave. Dad’s Club Contact: Kenneth Woods (619) 795-2036

22 3 to 5 p.m. Azalea Recreation Center 2596 Violet St. Arts & Creativity Class Ages 5-12 Contact: (619) 235-1162

We want to hear from you! Please submit photos taken in City Heights to editor@cityheightslife.com to be included in our Community Photo Showcase! Story ideas, articles, letters to the editor and comments are also welcome.

For a more complete list of events, visit www.cityheightslife.com.