As the sun set on the chilly evening of March 23, families from the surrounding neighborhood walked with snacks and blankets to Teralta Park. They met their neighbors and settled in to watch a family-friendly movie outdoors. This screening was the first in a series of movie nights at City Heights parks this year. The screenings, sponsored by a coalition of community organizations, continues monthly at various parks throughout the warmer months. Movie nights encourage families to enjoy the parks both in the day and evening, said City Heights Business Association Executive Director Enrique Gandarilla. “It’s their park,” Gan-

Learning about life while on the golf links in City Heights

By David Ogul
City Heights Life

Si camina por el Campo de Golf Colina Park, en el vecindario de Colina del Sol, verá un campo de golf. Pero si mira más detenidamente encontrará uno de los programas juveniles más inspiradores en San Diego, un esfuerzo de casi dos décadas de duración que ha ayudado a guiar a casi 15,000 niños en sus estudios con seriedad. "Somos un programa educativo que utiliza el golf como un medio para motivar a los niños a obtener los mejores resultados en sus estudios, y ayudarles a aprender a ser líderes exitosos", dijo Marty Remmell, CEO de Pro Kids Golf. La organización tiene proyectos de golf en varios campos de la región. ¡Así que si quieres saber más sobre cómo puedes unirte a Pro Kids Golf para ayudar a los niños a ser líderes exitosos, visita el sitio web de la organización!
Pro Kids was the brainchild of the late-Ernie Wright, an original Charger when the team was founded in Los Angeles and a member of the San Diego franchise that won the AFL championship in 1963. With the help of other community leaders, including then-City Councilman Ron Roberts and Price Charities founder Sol Price, the fledging program began at Colina Golf Course in 1994.

It was an uphill struggle. The golf course wasn’t exactly country club-esque at the time.

“Let’s call it a cow pasture would have been an insult to the cows,” said Wright in a 2008 San Diego Magazine story. “In City Heights at that time, you could call it representative of the neighborhood.”

Wright told the magazine he had been approached about starting a golf program for inner-city kids in the past. The links off 52nd Street were being run by a Florida company and was losing money at the time. When Colina Park became available in 1994, the city was more than willing to let Wright establish a program there. But why golf?

“One of the things that Ernie told me was that he learned how to cheat at football from a young age,” Remmell said. “He loved golf because he saw it as a game that you couldn’t cheat at. You have to call penalties on yourself. It’s definitely a game of honor. He saw that as teaching some valuable life lessons.”

Todd Smith is director of golf at Pro Kids; Chris Matthes is an education specialist who oversees the tutoring program. Both say the program is invaluable for City Heights youth.

“It has had a huge impact,” said Matthes, who was hired about a year ago. “Even in the short time that I’ve been here, I have seen such a change in their attitude toward learning.”

The key to reaching the kids, Matthes said, is getting to know them.

“You have to get to know them by name and address them by name,” he said. “The next thing you want to do is know more about the kid, know their background, know where they’re coming from. You have to know the kid if you want to communicate with them.”

Key is communicating the importance of education.

When the program began, it partnered with the San Diego Unified School District. Staffers work to tutor and still do — bring youth from the classroom to the golf course.

“The first thing we teach them is how to introduce yourself with a firm handshake while looking a person in the eye — making visual contact,” said Remmell.

In 2001, the organization built an 8,000-square-foot learning center through contributions from civic groups that included the Building Industry Association of San Diego. Total costs came to about $1.8 million. Pro Kids paid about $600,000. The BIA contributed close to half of the money, including the plumbers, drywallers and painters who donated their material and time, Remmell said.

Two years later, the golf course was renovated at a cost of about $1.5 million. Half of the money came from a state parks grant. The rest came from city, county, Price Charities and others.

Over the years, the focus on education has grown stronger. When Faye Elementary was built across the street, Pro Kids partnered with the new campus and started working closely with the students there. The study hall at Colina Golf Course is a second home to many kids.

Remmell points out that when she began working at Pro Kids in the group's seventh grade, she found one educator and five golf pros.

Today, it has four educators and four golf pros. Among the educators is a certified math teacher, along with a science instructor who once worked as a molecular biologist.

The center has a homework club that attracts between 25 and 40 students daily. It also tracks children’s reading scores.

Kids have to earn time on the course. They pay for rounds of golf by earning points through such things as doing community service, completing book reports, raking bunkers, and going on field trips to local businesses in an effort to learn about various career opportunities.

“We won’t let kids go on field trips or participate in other community activities unless they are caught up in school,” Smith said.

Despite the emphasis on education, or perhaps because of it, Pro Kids is turning out some pretty good golfers. Smith notes that duffers associated with the group racked up 65 wins last summer at San Diego Junior Golf Association championships. Some 16 kids qualified for the Callaway Junior World Golf Championships.

Roberto Rosas is one of the organization’s success stories. He began playing golf at Pro Kids as a seventh grader in 2003.

“You don’t get on the golf course until you learn the etiquette, until you learn how to introduce yourself, until you know what’s expected of you and your behavior,” said Rosas. “I started going there every day after school.”

“I became pretty OK.”

In fact, he became a starter on the varsity golf team at his high school, Francis Parker, a private school in Linda Vista he attended with the help of Pro Kids scholarships. He now attends Columbia University in New York, with Pro Kids paying for some of the grants and scholarships he has earned.

“Pro Kids has probably been the biggest influence on my life, and it has given me the tools I need to succeed academically and socially,” Rosas said.
Ibarra Elementary
School volunteer
is paid through children’s smiles

Irene Corey has taught elementary school in Ohio, owned her own importing business, and had a successful career in real estate. But it is the 82-year-old retiree’s volunteer work reading to preschoolers at Herbert Ibarra Elementary in City Heights that may be having the most impact on her life.

“I get back way more than I give,” Corey said. “I thought I was going to do something to help others. But they have helped me overcome some loneliness and a need to feel needed. Now that I’m no longer employed and no longer raising children of my own, I sometimes felt useless. I don’t feel that way when I’m with these wonderful children. They make me feel important.”

Corey said she had been looking to do some volunteer work for some time and had even signed up to deliver groceries to AIDS victims. But the latter didn’t quite work out.

“I couldn’t find the addresses, it was raining, the bags were getting wet, groceries were falling out of the bag, I was chasing oranges down the street. It was just not for me.”

Her first morning of service for the Rolling Readers program at Ibarra Elementary was different.

“This is something that just fits,” she said. “It’s not complicated at all. I’ve been reading to kids all my life.”

The three and four year old children are part of a preschool program aimed at giving them a head start in their studies and grasp of language.

“Many of them speak very little English; they’re just learning English. They come from Ethiopia, Iran, Latin America. I suspect many of them have been displaced, and some of them may have had some violent history in their short life, but they are thrilled to see me when I come in and they exude such happiness. It’s just wonderful to see.”

Corey spoke of the little things that have left an impression on her life, including a small Chinese boy who, when celebrating his birthday, patiently handed out pieces of cake, plastic plates, and forks to his classmates. “He was such a gentleman, really,” she said.

And she talked about a little girl from Africa who comes to school clad in a head scarf, blouse, robe, and long skirt. “She’s just an enthusiastic little kid,” Corey said. “There is just a bunch of energy in that child. She’s practically jumping out of her skin.”

Said Corey, who lives in University Heights and who reads every Tuesday for a half hour, “I can’t afford to give money, but I do have time that I can offer...I just want to make a difference to these little kids.”

By David Ogul
City Heights Life

El Pago para una Voluntaria de la Escuela Primaria Ibarra son las sonrisas de los niños

Irene Corey fue maestra de primaria en Ohio, dueña de su propio negocio de importación y exitosa agente de bienes raíces. Pero a sus 82 años de edad, su trabajo como voluntaria leyéndole a los niños de preescolar de la Escuela Primaria Herbert Ibarra en City Heights puede que sea lo que más impacico ha tenido en su vida.

“Recibo mucho más de lo que doy,” dijo Corey. “Pensaba que iba a ayudar a los demás. Pero ellos me han ayudado a superar la soledad y satisface la necesidad que todos tenemos de sentirnos necesitados. Ahora que ya no trabajo y que no estoy criando a mis propios hijos, a veces me siento inútil. No me siento así cuando estoy con estos maravillosos niños. Ellos me hacen sentir importante.”

Corey dijo que había estado buscando la forma de trabajar como voluntaria por algún tiempo y que incluso se inscribió para llevar comestibles a las víctimas de SIDA, pero que esto no funcionó.

“No podía encontrar las direcciones, llovía, se mojaban las bolsas, se caían los comestibles de las bolsas y teníamos que recoger las cosas de la calle. No era lo adecuado para mí.”

Pero la primera mañana que trabajó en el programa Rolling Readers de la escuela Ibarra fue diferente.

“Esto es a mi medida”, dijo. “No es nada complicado. He estado leyéndole a los niños durante toda mi vida.”

By David Ogul
City Heights Life

El Pago para una Voluntaria de la Escuela Primaria Ibarra son las sonrisas de los niños

Irene Corey at home in Normal Heights. Photo courtesy of Irene Corey

Irene Corey en su casa en Normal Heights. Foto cortesía de Irene Corey

[COREY, P8]
**Professor of Ethnic Studies engaged by City Heights’ extraordinary diversity**

By Adam Ward  
City Heights Life Guest Columnist

In the more than 10 years that Jesse Mills has been working in City Heights, the assistant professor of Ethnic Studies at the University of San Diego, has come to appreciate the community more everyday.

“City Heights has the uniqueness of being extraordinarily diverse in a kind of global sense,” he said.

Mills, who also lives in City Heights, works primarily with the Somali community, where racial identification can be secondary to tribe and clan lines, he said. He started tutoring Somalis and other East African immigrants while he was still in graduate school.

Somali Family Service of San Diego gave Mills its first Leadership Award in October for work he has done with the group on immigration and resolving differences.

Mills grew up in a mixed-race household in Santa Rosa.

He credits hip-hop pioneer KRS-One with inspiring his decision to study philosophy at Sonoma State University, where he was also a football player.

He went on to get a Masters Degree from the University of California, Los Angeles and a Ph.D. focusing on race and refugee resettlement from the University of California, San Diego.

This background made him a perfect fit for addressing racial equity issues at the launch of the Building Healthy Communities Initiative in City Heights. Mills did workshops with about 25 resident leaders, who in turn spread the word about the initiative and got feedback in small meeting groups in their houses in 2009.

His work helped the Mid-City Community Action Network’s Coordinating Council answer questions about how the initiative should be rolled out. For example, “who needs to be involved in the conversation of what to do about the Building Healthy Communities plan and what a healthy community looks like,” he said.

Eventually, these house-meeting leaders had more than 100 gatherings to spread the word in 13 different languages to more than 1,500 City Heights residents. These house meetings led to the plan for implementation of Building Healthy Communities in City Heights.

Mills knows training people to be more sensitive to racial barriers and privilege is never really done, despite a firm grounding at the launch of Building Healthy Communities in City Heights.

“It is just something that needs ongoing difficult work,” he said. “It’s not an easy thing to do to keep this number of different communities in dialog with each other.”

— 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. He can be contacted at award@midcitycan.org or (619) 283-9624 ext. 210.

**Second stage of Healthy Communities planning readies City Heights for action**

By Adam Ward  
City Heights Life Guest Columnist

Members of the School Attendance Momentum Team vote on the most serious issues for students on April 10 at Crawford High Educational Complex. Red is three points; yellow is two; green is one.

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HEART

He is respected by his peers, his teachers and residents of City Heights. But Jorge Palacios didn’t realize how much he encourages others to do their best until his classmates voted him the “Most Inspirational Senior.”

And for good reason. Jorge moved to the United States just three years ago. He did not know any English and at times struggled to figure out what his teachers were saying. Making matters more challenging was the different type of environment in schools here when compared to Mexico; schools south of the border, Jorge said, are very strict. Here, not so much.

Not only did Jorge have to adapt to a new culture, but he would have to learn English as well. “It wasn’t easy but there was no choice,” Jorge said. He has learned quickly. Recently, Jorge was asked to speak at a march promoting English as well. His passion and motivation for fighting for education goes back to when he first arrived in San Diego. His message was asked to speak at a march promoting English as well.

“One of the most important things I have learned from my teachers is that they never give up. They keep pushing me. They have taught me that I can achieve anything I set my mind to.”

Jorge’s passion and motivation for fighting for education goes back to when he first came to the United States. During his freshmen year, he was enrolled in an English as a Second Language class and felt the experience to be difficult with 28 students in one class. Everyone was trying to learn the same language but everyone came from different countries and cultures. There were multiple languages in one classroom so it was difficult to get any one-on-one with the teacher.

“It was hard with 28 people,” Jorge said. “Just imagine how it would be with 30, 40 or even 50 in a classroom if money is cut from education.”

He also saw the impact teacher layoffs can have first hand. Jorge is a Visual and Performing Arts student, and many VAPA teachers have lost their jobs the past two years. When their favorite teachers were laid off, many students decided to leave the VAPA program, with many dropping out in the middle of the year, because the quality had suffered.

“I am worried about the students. We all understand what is going on and I am worried about the new students coming into high school,” Jorge said.

Jorge said he speaks up for education because he feels teachers are undervalued. He wants to bring attention to their plight before it is too late.

Jorge also is a member of the FACES academy, which is dedicated to students who are interested in the medical field. Jorge wants to become a doctor and return to City Heights after he earns his degrees to help those in need.

He plans to attend Southwestern College before transferring to UCSD for his bachelor’s degree and medical school.

For now, though, fighting against further cuts to education is his passion. “Today defines our future, if we don’t educate the new generation we are not going to be able to compete with other countries like China and Brazil,” Jorge said. “They know how to invest on education.”

EIGHTS

The UCSD Moores Cancer Center will recognize the Rosa Parks Elementary School Cancer Prevention Club at its May 5 Celebrity Chefs Cook Gala.

The Rosa Parks club raised $6,500 over the past seven months for cancer research through bake sales and the first ever Rosa Parks Jamboree.

“The club is composed of a small group of energetic 4th and 5th graders seeking to make a difference in the world,” said 3rd grade teacher Brenda Taylor, who serves as the club’s advisor. “The enthusiasm and dedication of the kids, combined with the desire of the City Heights community to contribute to the fight against cancer, has been truly amazing and touching. The cancer club has been a wonderful experience for our entire school community.”

COUNCILMAN GLORIA HONORS JROTC

San Diego City Councilman Todd Gloria was the guest speaker at the annual San Diego Unified JROTC Ball on March 24.

The event drew more than 1,000 JROTC students from the 13 programs around the district; it has been held nearly every year since 1937. Gloria reflected on his days as a Madison High School cadet and shared the impact the program had on his life. “JROTC taught me to be prepared for the unexpected, become an effective communicator, and a contributing part of a team,” he said.

Students from each campus, including Hoover High in City Heights, completed traditional presentation of the Royal Court to their principals and senior military instructor.

For more information on the JROTC program, contact David Guzman at dguzman@sandi.net.

GRADUATION STANDARDS GET TOUGHER

It will soon be tougher to graduate from high school. San Diego Unified’s Board of Education on April 10 approved using University of California’s ‘A-through-G’ courses as a basis for graduation requirements for students, beginning with the Class of 2016. It removed an earlier proposal to mandate two semesters of career-technical education courses.

Students will be required to complete the ‘A-G’ coursework in order to graduate high school, but will have to take popular career-technical classes as electives.

The Board also voted to fund workshops over the next school year to let parents and students know about the new requirements. Because the new requirements are more rigorous than those required by the state, additional funding is being allocated for students who need help to pass the required courses.

More information on the current and future graduation requirements is available online at www.sandi.net/graduation.

DISTRICT LAUDED FOR ABSENTEEISM FIGHT

State schools Supt. Tom Torlakson has lauded San Diego Unified for its efforts to reduce absenteeism in the classroom, as the district was named one of 11 in California that are “models of attendance improvement.”

The district reported its third straight year of attendance gains, with more than 96 percent of students in school or on excused absences every day.

“We can’t teach students if they’re not in class,” said San Diego’s superintendent, Bill Kowba. “This has been a total effort among staff and the community to do everything possible to make sure kids are in school.”

Officials say the gains are due to a variety of factors, including a district School Attendance Review Board; new computer software to track absenteeism; and the Dropout Prevention program.

“Our great support by the parents, our community partners and the wonderful residents of San Diego contributes to this success,” said school board President John Lee Evans. “They know that if they see a school-age child out and about on a school day, there should be some questions asked. Specifically, why isn’t that child in school.”

Districts that have been named as models of attendance are those that taking action to help students and families improve attendance, rather than just seek to punish offenders.

“We will need to address problems with truancy, we cannot over look students and families that may need support due to health or emotional problems, or who may simply not realize the importance of regular school attendance, even in kindergarten,” Torlakson said.
The next generation of science and environmental LEADERS

By Claudia Rodriguez

College? That was not exactly what my parents or I had in mind when we moved to City Heights from Mexico City. Like many parents in City Heights, mine wanted a better future for me, but they had no idea what getting into college involved.

Thanks to a partnership between the Ocean Discovery Institute, the University of San Diego, and the National Science Foundation, I and others are living our dream.

The Ocean Leader Scholarship at USD is part of an initiative to increase the number of students from underrepresented backgrounds into the sciences. The program provides ample support and research opportunities through campus entities, as well as ongoing counseling from assistant professors at USD’s Department of Marine Science and Environmental Studies and Dr. Drew Talley, science director of Ocean Discovery Institute’s Scientific Advisory Board.

Once selected, Ocean Leader Scholars take on various opportunities to prepare for a career in science and forms part of the scientific leadership within his or her community.

Growing up in City Heights presented me with the opportunity my parents wanted and allowed me to find organizations and resources such as Ocean Discovery Institute to support my interests and preparation for college. Now, I’m not only a college graduate, but part of the Ocean Discovery Institute team that supports the next generation of science and environmental leaders from City Heights. As the College and Career Coordinator for the Leaders Initiative, I have the opportunity to help other students from my community pursue college.

Another student, Daisy Mercado, quickly found her passion for ecology through exposure to research opportunities, convincing her that science was the most fitting path for her.

Students in the program are prepared not only for a successful future at USD, but also ready to become tomorrow’s scientific and environmental leaders. Yajaira, Daisy, and Monica are just three of the many City Heights students who are achieving their dreams through college. With your support, we can continue to prepare our students for future careers.

— Claudia Rodriguez is a City Heights resident, recent graduate of UC Berkeley, and currently the College and Career Coordinator for the Leaders Initiative at Ocean Discovery Institute. If you are interested in supporting her work, you can volunteer to help at a College Preparation Boot Camp. She can be reached at crodriguez@oceanDI.org or (619) 550-8618.
La Próxima Generación de Líderes Científicos y Ambientales

Por Claudia Rodriguez

¿Asistir a la universidad? No era exactamente lo que teníamos en mente mis padres y yo cuando nos mudamos a City Heights desde la Ciudad de México. Como muchos padres de City Heights, los míos querían un mejor futuro para mí, pero no tenían idea de lo que implicaba tratar de ingresar a la universidad.

Gracias a una alianza entre el Instituto Ocean Discovery, la Universidad de San Diego y la Fundación Nacional para las Ciencias (NSF, por sus siglas en inglés) puedo, al igual que otros, alcanzar mi sueño. La beca Ocean Leader de USD es parte de una iniciativa que busca aumentar la cantidad de estudiantes provenientes de comunidades subrepresentadas que optan por el área científica. El programa ofrece apoyo y oportunidades de investigación a través de las entidades del campus y asesoramiento continuo cortesía de los profesores asistentes del Departamento de Ciencias Marinas y Estudios Ambientales de USD y del Dr. Drew Talley, director científico de la Junta de Asesoramiento Científico del Instituto Ocean Discovery.

Al ser elegidos, los becarios Ocean Leader aprovechan diversas oportunidades para prepararse para carreras en el área científica y se convierten en parte de los líderes científicos de su comunidad. Vivir en City Heights ayudó a mis padres a encontrar la oportunidad que estaban buscando para mí y me permitió encontrar organizaciones y recursos, tales como el Instituto Ocean Discovery, que me permiten reforzar mis intereses y a prepararme para la universidad. En la actualidad, no solo tengo un título universitario, sino que soy parte del equipo del Instituto Ocean Discovery que se dedica a guiar a la futura generación de líderes científicos y ambientales de City Heights. Como Coordinadora de Universidades y Carreras de Leaders Initiative, tengo la oportunidad de ayudar a otros estudiantes de mi comunidad a asistir a la universidad. Una de estas estudiantes, Yajaira Nuñez, entró a formar parte del Instituto Ocean Discovery cuando cursaba onceavo grado. Se dio cuenta de que su futuro no solo dependía de graduarse de una licenciatura, sino que también tenía que estudiar un doctorado en ciencias para poder trabajar como profesora universitaria. Otra estudiante, Daisy Mercado, rápidamente se apasionó por la ecología a través de diversas oportunidades de investigación, convenciéndose de que el camino científico era el más adecuado para ella. Mónica Cisneros, estudiante de último año de Hoover High, acompañará a Daisy y Yajaira en USD en el otoño. “¡No podía creer que fue escogida como becaria Ocean Leader!”, dijo Mónica cuando se enteró de haber sido seleccionada. “Saber que asistiré a una de las mejores universidades del país —y que voy a ingresar a la escuela de mis sueños con una beca—no tiene precio. Estoy extremadamente agradecida por este reconocimiento y estoy preparada para aprovechar esta maravillosa oportunidad.”

Los estudiantes que pertenecen al programa se preparan no solo para un futuro exitoso en USD, también se preparan para convertirse en los líderes científicos y ambientales del mañana. Yajaira, Daisy y Mónica son solo tres de los muchos estudiantes de City Heights que están alcanzando sus sueños a través de sus estudios universitarios. Con su apoyo, podemos seguir preparando a nuestros estudiantes para sus futuras profesiones.

— Claudia Rodriguez reside en City Heights y se graduó recientemente de UC Berkeley. En la actualidad ocupa la posición de Coordinadora de Universidades y Carreras del programa Leaders Initiative del Instituto Ocean Discovery. Si estás interesado en apoyar su labor, puedes trabajar como voluntario/a y ayudar durante un Campamento de Entrenamiento Universitario. Puedes contactarla escribiendo a crodriguez@oceanDI.org o llamando al (619) 550-8618.

La próxima generación de líderes científicos y ambientales
Copley Family YMCA offers day-camp, day-care programs

By David Ogul
City Heights Life

It’s not too early to start thinking about daycare and summer camps for when school gets out this summer. And the Copley Family YMCA, 3901 Landis St. in City Heights, may have the type of affordable program you’re looking for.

The YMCA offers a state-licensed day-care program that can be free for low-income families, depending on income. All child-care staffers speak Spanish.

“It’s a very family-oriented branch, everybody knows your name, you’re part of a family, and we teach values such as caring, honesty, respect and responsibility,” said Pam George, the YMCA’s senior program director.

The day-care program for children ages 5 through 12 is open from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily, and includes breakfast, lunch and snacks. Children can go on field trips, swim in the pool, play games and make crafts.

There is no cost for a family of four earning less than $3,908 per month. George said. Low-income families earning more than that amount may be eligible for reduced rates.

The program for children from 2 to 5 years old is fee-based, but scholarships are available for families in need. Members of the YMCA pay $140 per week; non-members pay $155 weekly per child.

Cost for summer day camps depend on the program you choose. Day camps offer more activities than day care programs.

Further information can be obtained by calling (619) 283-2251, by emailing George at pgeorge@ymca.org, or by visiting www.copleyymca.org.

Enrollment is ongoing. For those looking for drop-in programs, there are a couple opportunities just down the street. At the City Heights Swim Center pool, 4380 Landis St., hours are set from 3 to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday, and from 8:30 to 10 a.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Recreation swim hours are set from 3 to 4:15 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The admission fee is $2 for children under 16, $4 for those 16 and older. Discount passes are available. Children under 7 or shorter than 4 feet must be accompanied by a paying adult.

At the adjoining City Heights Recreation Center, kids can enroll in a variety of classes and take part in numerous activities. Cost depends on the class.

For further information, contact the center at 619-516-3082.

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Corey, de P3

vida.”

Los niños de tres y cuatro años de edad son parte de un programa preescolar que tiene como objetivo impulsarlos en sus estudios y mejorar su dominio del lenguaje.

“Muchos de ellos hablan muy poco inglés o están aprendiendo. Son de Etiopía, Irán, América Latina. Sospecho que muchos de ellos fueron desplazados y algunos de ellos pueden haber atravesado situaciones violentas en su corta vida, pero los encantaba verme llegar y transmiten mucha felicidad. Es algo maravilloso.”

Corey habló de las cosas pequeñas que han dejado una huella en su vida, incluyendo a un niño chino que estaba celebrando su cumpleaños y que le entregaba pacientemente a sus compañeros tesoros de pastel, platos y tenedores plásticos. “Realmente se portó como todo un caballero”, dijo.

También nos contó acerca de la niña de África que llega a la escuela con un velo en la cabeza, una niñita llena de entusiasmo”, dijo Corey. “Esa niña está llena de energía. Tanto que prácticamente no puede contenerla.”

Corey, quien vive en University Heights y que acude a leerles todos los martes por media hora, dijo, “No puedo donar dinero, pero tengo tiempo que ofrecer…”

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El YMCA Copley Family ofrece campamentos diurnos y programas de guardería

Por David Ogul
City Heights Life

No es demasiado temprano para pensar acerca de guarderías y campamentos de verano para las vacaciones escolares de verano. El YMCA Copley Family, ubicado en 3901 Landis St. en City Heights, tal vez tiene el tipo de programa que estás buscando a un precio económico.

El YMCA cuenta con un programa de guardería certificado por el estado que puede ser gratuito para las familias de bajos recursos, dependiendo de sus ingresos. Todo el personal de la guardería habla español.

“Somos una agencia orientada hacia las familias, aquí todo el mundo sabe tu nombre, eres parte de la familia e inculcamos valores tales como comprensión, honestidad, respeto y responsabilidad”, dijo Pam George, directora de programas del YMCA.

El programa de guardería es para niños entre 5 y 12 años de edad y está abierto de 6 a.m. a 6 p.m. diariamente; incluye desayuno, almuerzo y meriendas. Niños pueden asistir a excursiones, nadar en la alberca, jugar y trabajar en manualidades.

Las familias con ingresos por debajo de $3,908 al mes, no tienen que pagar por participar en el programa, dijo George. Las familias de bajos recursos que ganan más de esta cantidad, pueden calificar para una reducción en la tarifa. El programa para niños entre 2 y 5 años de edad tiene un costo asociado, pero cuentan con becas para las familias necesitadas. Los miembros del YMCA pagan $140 por semana para cada niño; los que no son miembros pagan $155 semanalmente por cada niño.

El precio de los campamentos diurnos de verano depende del tipo de programa que exijas. Campamentos diurnos ofrecen más actividades que los programas de guardería. Puedes obtener más información llamando al (619) 283-2251, escribiéndole a George a la dirección pgeorge@ymca.org o poniendo su nombre, eres parte de la familia e inculcamos valores tales como comprensión, honestidad, respeto y responsabilidad”, dijo Pam George, directora de programas del YMCA.

El proceso de inscripción está en marcha. Para aquellos que están buscando programas que no requieran de previa inscripción, existen un par de oportunidades muy cerca de aquí. La alberca de City Heights Swim Center, 4380 Landis St. está abierta de 3 a 7 p.m. de lunes a viernes y de 8:30 a 10 a.m. los lunes, miércoles y viernes. El horario para nado recreativo es de 3 a 4:15 p.m. de lunes a viernes.

El precio de la admisión es de $2 por cada niño menor de 16 años, $4 por los mayores de 16 años. Hay pases de descuento disponibles. Los niños menores de 7 años que midan menos de 4 pies de altura, deben estar acompañados por un adulto que haya pagado el precio de admisión.

En el Centro Recreativo de City Heights contigo, los niños pueden inscribirse en una variedad de clases y participar en numerosas actividades. El precio depende de la clase. Contactar al centro para más información llamando al 619-516-3082.

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NON-PROFIT, from P4

and the Access to Health Care team. Both teams of about two dozen engaged residents will meet up to 12 times to go through exercises designed to ramp up their advocacy skills and lay the groundwork for the teams’ future focus.

“It’s a big commitment, but it’s worth it,” Saleban said.

For Rhoda Abdi said her son, a student at Crawford, is the reason she participates.

“My son going to Crawford inspires me because of what he sees,” Abdi said. “My son believes that Crawford is better than many schools, but it doesn’t get a fair share of funding.”

Abdi wants nothing less than a better, healthier community for her 16-year-old son and others like him in City Heights, she said.

“There is cycle of problems, and for people to get out of it, they need to take it seriously,” Abdi said.

Abdi and other residents in the planning process have shown that they do.

— 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. He can be contacted at award@midcitycan.org or (619) 283-9624 ext. 210.
Local print shop has witnessed the changing faces of City Heights

By Beryl Forman
El Cajon Boulevard Business Improvement Association

Like so many businesses on El Cajon Boulevard, PIP Printing is a family-run operation. The store’s owner, Jay Levine, started working at PIP when his parents owned it.

The Levine family moved to San Diego from Chicago in 1971 and Jay’s parents bought the PIP Printing franchise at that time. During the height of PIP’s success there were more than 1,600 locations throughout the United States, with 22 of those were in San Diego County. Though their location on the Boulevard is the last one remaining in San Diego, Jay still believes that the assistance and name recognition that the PIP Printing franchise has offered his business has proven a good investment.

Jay left PIP to attend college, where he studied business with plans to pursue a career in the corporate world. Although he thrived in that environment, he came to believe he was better suited to run his own business. When his parents encouraged him to move home and take the business over from his father, Jay followed through; PIP has been a growing business ever since. As a business owner, Jay revels in the success of his efforts, which are directly related to the hard work he has invested in the company.

Upon his return to the family business, the neighborhood had changed dramatically. Immigrants from all over the world settled in the community. The economic environment also radically declined. Due to competition from new development in outlying suburbs, El Cajon Boulevard developed challenges consistent with other older urban neighborhoods throughout the country.

But it is the eclectic nature of the community that has kept Jay here. It also is what encourages him to take on the challenges of redirecting investment back into the area. Based on this and a desire to give back to the neighborhood that has always supported him, Jay began attending meetings at the El Cajon Boulevard Business Improvement Association, and he has played an active role in the group for over 20 years.

Jay helps his clients with their overall marketing approach while developing cost-effective ways of advertising. The focus is on customer service and meeting the needs of the client. Although a majority of PIP’s clients are scattered throughout the West Coast, Jay admits that the more fulfilling part of his work comes from serving the diverse ethnic community here at home. He sees them as people who truly appreciate the opportunity that this country offers, and they embody the same entrepreneurial spirit that made this country great.

— Beryl Forman is the program and marketing manager for the El Cajon Boulevard Business Improvement Association

Local print shop has witnessed the changing faces of City Heights

By Megan Burks and Brian Myers
Speak City Heights

In March, a group assembled by the City Heights Community Development Corporation’s Built Environment Team set out to traverse 2.5 miles of the neighborhood — by foot, wheelchair and stroller.

The goal was to survey sidewalk conditions and pedestrian hazards in need of attention from regional planners and elected officials.

Sidewalk and crosswalk deficiencies add up to big problems for City Heights residents, who are four times more likely to use transit and walk or wheel to transit stops — than the rest of the nation. Between 2002 and 2007, the rate of pedestrian crashes in City Heights was twice the nation. Between 2002 and 2007, the rate of pedestrian crashes in City Heights was twice the nation.

What stood out for most of the participants was how conditions changed the farther east they went. Through the Cherokee Point and Corridor business districts, sidewalks were much easier to use, even pleasant. There, the streets were built to accommodate a streetcar that ran east to Euclid Avenue. Emphasis was on wide walkways, trees and streetlamps.

Past Euclid, University Avenue widens to four lanes, sidewalks narrow and crosswalks are scattered up to six blocks apart. “Unfortunately, after World War II the philosophy that was dominant in the United States, especially in Southern California, was an automobile-centric one, ” said Van Vleck. “The idea was to move cars as fast as possible. When we did that, we stopped planning for pedestrians and transit.”

Planners and groups like Van Vleck’s are working to revert back to some of the features popular before the automobile era.

In 2008, California lawmakers adopted the Complete Streets Act, which requires municipalities and urban planners to consider all types of road users when updating general plans and laying out projects. Cities, counties and transportation authorities have followed suit.

Late last year, the San Diego City Council and Eastern Area Communities Planning Committee approved a plan for the intersection of University Avenue and 54th Street that embraces complete streets ideas. There, cars can turn right through the intersection without stopping, thanks to separate turn lanes that function like freeway on-ramps.

According to Van Vleck, 77 crashes happened there between 2000 and 2010, making it one of San Diego’s most dangerous intersections.

Together with city staff, consultants and other advocacy groups, the Built Environment Team helped draw up plans that will slow right turns through the intersection by filling the separate turn lanes with green space. Cars will have to drive up to a perpendicular intersection before turning.

The approved plan is another win in a series of small-but-significant successes for City Heights residents. In September, city workers painted a crosswalk and improved visibility at University Avenue and 50th Street at the behest of nearby residents and shop owners, who saw 20 pedestrian accidents there between 2005 and 2010.

“I was really pleased with what I found,” said Theresa Quiroz, treasurer of the City Heights CDC, after the first leg of the walk. “When I first arrived here, we had some really unworkable streets and it’s become a lot more easy to walk around. The sidewalks are better, there are a lot more ramps to make it so that you can get from the sidewalk to the road and back up again.”

More quick fixes — like adding a curb ramp at 48th Street and University Avenue or filling in empty planters — could be on the way. Staff members from City Councilwoman Marti Emerald’s office and SANDAG planner Beth Robuhren were also on the walking tour taking notes.

“What the people of City Heights want is complete streets,” Van Vleck said. “We know that they work in other neighborhoods. We know where the funding is to do it. The next step is to implement it and put those things into the ground.”

To get involved, contact Randy Van Vleck at vansveck@cityheightsdc.org or (619) 584-1535.

You can see video of the event from Media Arts Center San Diego at http://www.youtube.com/speakcityheights.
Pro Kids pagó unos $600,000. BIA contribuyó con el resto, incluyendo plumeros, instaladores de láminas de yeso y pintores que donaron sus materiales y tiempo, dijo Remmell. Dos años después, el campo de golf fue renovado a un costo aproximado de $1.5 millones. La mitad del dinero provino de una subvención del puerto de San Diego. La mitad restante provino de una subvención de $1.8 millones.

“Lo primero que les enseñamos es a presentarse con un firme apretón de manos mientras miran a la persona a los ojos—haciendo contacto visual”, dijo Remmell.

En el 2001, la organización construyó un centro de aprendizaje de 8,000 pies cuadrados gracias a la contribución de diversos grupos civicos, entre ellos la Asociación de la Industria de la Construcción de San Diego (BIA, por sus siglas en inglés). El costo de la instalación fue casi $1.8 millones.

GOLF SPN, de P2

El sitio de la educación. En sus inicios, el programa se asoció al Distrito Escolar Unificado de San Diego. El personal podía—y todavía lo hace—llevar alumnos a jóvenes directamente del salón de clases al campo de golf.

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Haciendo que sea más fácil
Caminar y Rodar en City Heights

Por Megan Burks and Brian Myers
Speak City Heights

En el mes de marzo, un grupo convocado por el Equipo Built Environment de la Corporación para el Desarrollo Comunitario de City Heights, se propuso atravesar 2.5 millas del vecindario—o pte, en silla de ruedas y empujando cochequetos.

Su objetivo era evaluar las condiciones de las aceras e identificar peligros peatonales potenciales que necesitaran de la atención de los planificadores regionales y de los funcionarios electos.

Las deficiencias de las aceras y cruces peatonales representan un gran problema para los residentes de City Heights, quienes tienen cuatro veces más posibilidades de hacer uso de los servicios de transporte público—teniendo que caminar o llegar en silla de ruedas a las paradas—que el resto de la nación. De acuerdo a Health Equity by Design, entre el 2002 y el 2007, la tasa de accidentes peatonales en City Heights fue dos veces más alta que la tasa a nivel de la ciudad.

A lo largo de la Avenida University, entre las calles Boundary y 54, los participantes notaron cruces peatonales en precario estado, aceras muy angostas para el paso de sillas de ruedas, baches peligrosos producidos por las raíces de los árboles y rampas inexistentes o demasiado pequeñas para el paso del tranvía que se dirigía al este, hacia la Avenida Euclid. El enfasis fue la instalación de aceras espaciosas, árboles y tiendas.

Pasando Euclid, la Avenida University se ensancha a cuatro carriles, las aceras se vuelven más angostas y los cruces peatonales están ubicados a una distancia de hasta seis manzanas entre ellos.

Desafortunadamente, después de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, la filosofía dominante en los Estados Unidos, especialmente en el sur de California, se centraba en los automóviles, dijo Van Vleck. “La idea era que los automóviles se movieran lo más rápido posible. Al hacerlo, dejamos de planificar pensando en los peatones y el tránsito.”

Los planificadores y grupos como el de Van Vleck, están trabajando para trae de vuelta algunas de las características que eran populares antes de la era automovilística.

En el 2008, los legisladores de California adoptaron la Ley Calles Complejas, la cual requiere que los municipios y planificadores urbanos tomen en cuenta a todos los tipos de personas que utilizan las calles al actualizar las planes generales y definir sus proyectos. Las ciudades, condados y autoridades de transporte han cumplido con este mandato.

A finales de el año pasado, el Concejo de la Ciudad de San Diego y el Comité de Planificación para las Comunidades del Área Este aprobaron un plan para la intersección de la Avenida University y la calle 54 que incorpora el concepto de “calles complejas”. En el área, los automóviles pueden girar a la derecha a través de la intersección sin detenerse, gracias a carriles independientes para girar que funcionan como rampas en la autopista.

De acuerdo a Van Vleck, 77 collisiones ocurrieron en el área entre el 2000 y el 2010, convirtiéndose en una de las intersecciones más peligrosas de San Diego.

Trabajando junto con el personal de la oficina de la Concejal Marti Emerald y la planificadora de SAN-DAG, Beth Robrahn, participaron y tomaron notas también durante las caminatas.


Si desea formar parte de este esfuerzo, puede contactar a Randy Van Vleck escribiendo a rvanvleck@cityheightsdc.org o llamando al (619) 584-1535.

Puede ver el video del evento cortesía del Centro de Artes Mediacicas de San Diego visitando http://www.youtube.com/speakcityheights.
Fundraiser honors former City Heights resident

The Jamie’s Joy Memorial Fund is hosting a fundraiser for the Monarch School on May 19, from 2 to 6 p.m., in Balboa Park. The Jamie’s Joy Memorial Fund honors former City Heights resident Jamie Morgan Mychael Bratton-McNeely, who died at the age of 5 in a car crash in 2002.

Jamie’s parents, Azalea Park residents Mychael and Eleni, created a memorial fund in his honor at the San Diego Foundation to raise money for organizations that reflect Jamie’s passion for joy, love, and peace. This year the fundraiser is supporting the Monarch School, which serves more than 400 homeless youth from kindergarten through 12th grade.

For more information about the event please contact Mychael or Eleni at 619-282-2553.
— Staff report

We want to hear from you!

Please submit photos taken in City Heights to editor@cityheightslife.com! Story ideas, articles, letters to the editor and comments are also welcome.