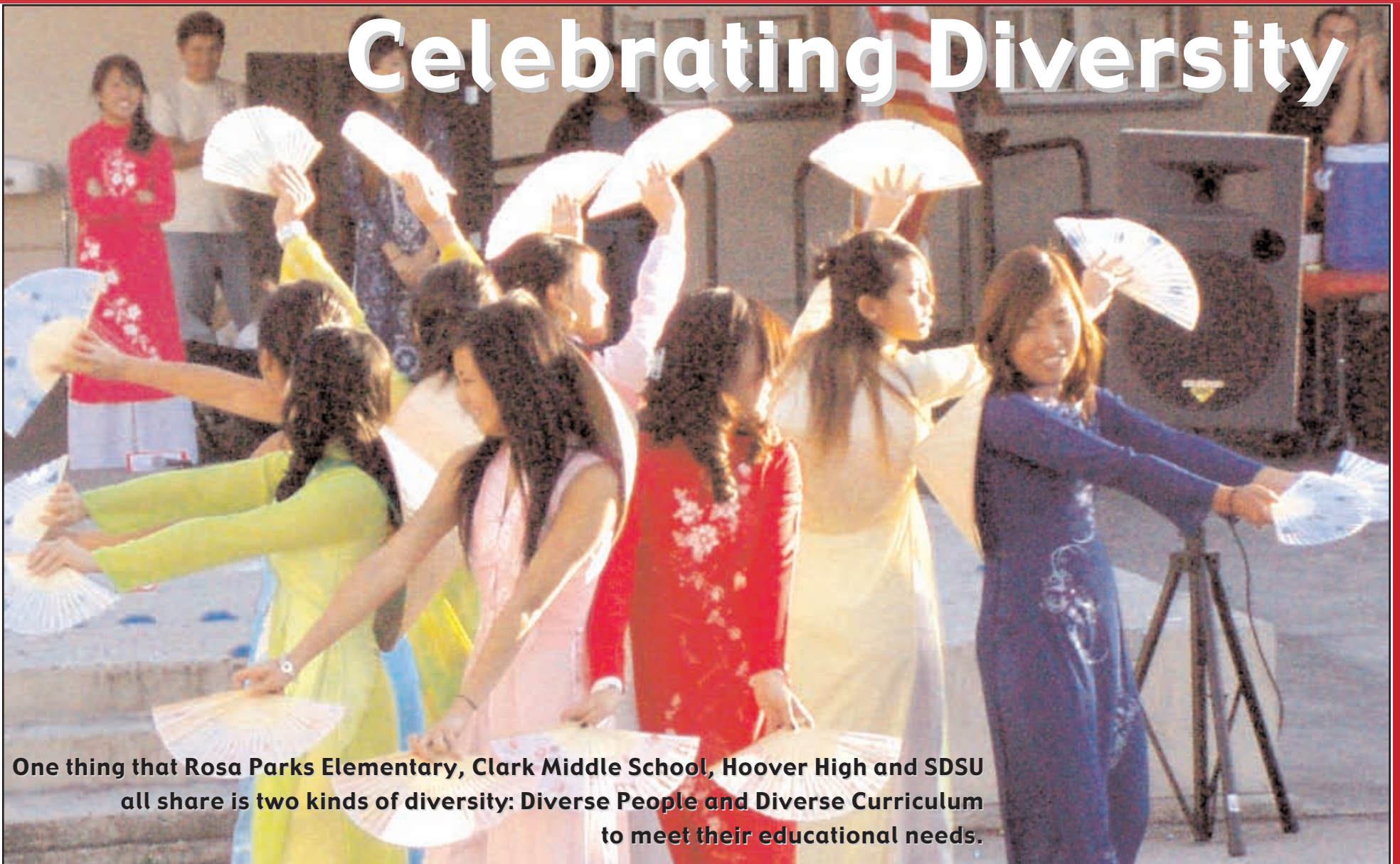


**CITY HEIGHTS COLLABORATIVE**

# Chronicle

*HIGHLIGHTING THE PARTNERSHIP OF  
SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY, HOOVER HIGH, MONROE CLARK MIDDLE, ROSA PARKS ELEMENTARY,  
PRICE CHARITIES, AND THE SAN DIEGO EDUCATION ASSOCIATION*

## Celebrating Diversity



**One thing that Rosa Parks Elementary, Clark Middle School, Hoover High and SDSU all share is two kinds of diversity: Diverse People and Diverse Curriculum to meet their educational needs.**

Cover: Hoover High students perform a traditional Vietnamese dance during their New Year celebration at school

Hoover Wins CIF! - page 3



A Day in Pompeii - page 10



All-School Concert - page 14



**INSIDE**

March 2008



# From the Director's Desk

By Tim Allen, Ph.D.

Executive Director, SDSU City Heights Educational Collaborative

In this issue of the Chronicle, it is obvious that schools in the City Heights Educational Collaborative are creating an environment where student interests can be matched to wonderful opportunities. These opportunities are what the Collaborative should be about. What we are able to do in our schools is support this special environment and contribute what we can to improve the educational attainment, the wellness, and the life success of our students.

While I would like to write exclusively about how well things are going, I have to acknowledge the budget crisis our educational system is facing. The impending cuts and layoffs affect everyone and changes our perspective about what is possible. I, as well as all the staff, students and parents, are beginning to feel a deep sense of anticipated loss because we know that some of our dedicated staff most likely will not be able to continue with us as we downsize our budgets. There may be some hope that things will change as we get closer to a final budget during the summer, but because of legal requirements for school districts, most changes occurring before June 30th are irreversible. Midge Backensto and I have attended most SSC/Governance Team meetings and have been working with the school principals to see how we can work together to preserve the best things happening at all sites.

Each week, I meet with representatives from SDSU and Price



Charities along with the principals of the three schools to share information and to discuss issues and initiatives. One area we have discussed as a beginning to a larger Collaborative discussion relates to what we actually want for our students who are educated in Collaborative schools. We all know that we want much more than good test scores. While student academic achievement is fundamental and important -- and we should have a sense of urgency in their improvement -- we also want our students to be able to move on having had the opportunities students would receive in more affluent areas. Many of us see student proficiency as more than academic achievement and that it includes the arts, sports, etc. Our teachers and other staff work hard to provide and support other experiences for students and our community partners provide incredible resources. That is why we are proposing the following expectations for students:

The mission of the City Heights Educational Collaborative is to develop essential 21st Century life skills in all students.

*Intellectually, students need to develop proficiency in:*

- ◆ Academic and career technical content
- ◆ Oral and written communication
- ◆ Critical thinking/problem solving
- ◆ Creativity and innovation
- ◆ Information communication technology

*Personally, students need to develop proficiency in:*

- ◆ Interpersonal skills
- ◆ Self-Management skills

*Socially, students need to develop proficiency in:*

- ◆ Understanding and valuing diversity
- ◆ Ethics and social responsibility

We think that this proposed mission captures what we do and want to do for students in the City Heights Educational Collaborative and we look forward to discussing it Collaborative-wide to complete it.

As we move beyond our current crisis, we, as a Collaborative, will continue to find ways to add value to experiences of our staff and students and their families. There are new challenges ahead that include selection of the best possible principal for Monroe Clark and finding ways to reduce the impact of the budget crisis. Working together, we can ensure that the Collaborative creates even more opportunities to work together so that our students and their families receive the best education possible.

## In This Issue

This issue of the City Heights Collaborative Chronicle focuses on two types of diversity that characterize our schools.

One is the amazing diversity of our students, who trace their roots to dozens of different countries and cultures. Through holidays and special events throughout the year, and through interactions every day, we can learn about the world without leaving our neighborhood. We are able to understand and value others -- a quality that is important for success in life.

The other type of diversity that characterizes Rosa Parks Elementary, Monroe Clark Middle School and Hoover High is the diversity of the academic curriculum, as well as the clubs, sports teams, student organizations and after-school programs. From athletics to art, and from calculus to cake decorating, there is something to spark every interest. Through Parent Centers at each school, moms, dads and grandparents also have a wide variety of educational opportunities.

If you are bored or uninspired at school, then get more involved in one of the dozens of classes or programs that are offered. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain!

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# PROGRAM PROFILES

## Hoover Basketball Wins Another Title

*Boys' team captures second CIF Championship in 3 years*



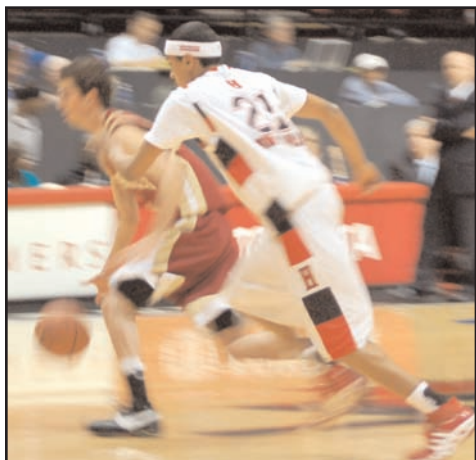
Hoover High's boy's basketball team added another CIF championship to their collection earlier this month with a victory over Mission Hills at Cox Stadium. The win was Hoover's third Central League championship in five years, leaving them with an undefeated record of 10-0. Hoover also led San Diego in scoring with an average of 73 points per game.

The growing number of titles demonstrates the huge transformation that has taken place over the last 8 years -- a change that coincided with the arrival of coach Ollie Goulston. Before he took over the position, the Cardinals had gone 18-59 over the

previous three years. By comparison, this season Coach Goulston surpassed 100 wins at Hoover.

Credit also goes to a young but dedicated team that never gave up. The CIF Championship game was no exception. Trailing 28-20 fifteen minutes into the game, Hoover battled back to take a 37-33 into halftime. Using their tenacious defense and offensive speed, the team never trailed again, winning 54-43.

In the state playoffs Hoover beat Colony (Ontario) 81-78 but lost to Edison (Fresno) in the state quarterfinals 58-68. The team finished its season with a record of 27-7 and were ranked #2 overall in San Diego.



### Photos

Above: Hoover's Angelo Chol battles for position in the paint in the CIF playoff game against Steele Canyon

Far Left: Idris ibn Idris using his speed on defense against Mission Hills

Left: Corey Trisby looks for an inside pass in the CIF Championship

## Rosa Parks Celebrates Read Across America

Hundreds of students turned out on March 5 for Rosa Parks Elementary's annual Read Across America event. This year featured a carnival of games, crafts, and fun to celebrate and encourage reading. The Rosa Parks library also gave away nearly 500 books.

Read Across America is sponsored by the National Education Association. More than 45 million children and adults participate each year throughout the United States to stress the importance of reading. "The pictures and sounds of reading build a foundation of achievement in both school and life," said NEA president Reg Weaver. "The first time a parent, grandparent, or sibling picks up a book and opens it with a child, the future burns brighter."

Thanks to faculty, parents, and especially library staff for helping spread this important message.





# Green Advocacy at Hoover High



By Alexiz Martinez  
Freelance Writer and Hoover High Student

The Eco-Club at Hoover High School, which consists of over 30 members, has worked hard to improve conservation awareness within Hoover and the City Heights community. Eco, short for ecology, organizes clean up events in school and in the community in hopes of increasing environmental action. The Eco-Club aims to increase on-campus recycling and to educate students and staff.

Recycling is one of the most important ways Hoover can help. The Eco-Club collects aluminum soda cans, plastic beverage containers, printer cartridges and cell phones for recycling. A battery collection program was also initiated by distributing containers to classrooms that use a lot of batteries and to teachers who requested them. The batteries are given to Hoover's Maintenance Operations Supervisor for proper disposal at the Miramar Landfill so they will not contaminate our environment.

Promoting environmental awareness is an equally important goal of the Eco-Club. They have collected shoeboxes and decorated them with motivating recycling quotes to help encourage teachers and students, and also create

educational posters and flyers to remind students to clean up after themselves and to remember to recycle.

In 2006, Hoover High's Eco-Club created a video about campus conservation efforts and entered an anti-litter video in MTV's Break the Addiction contest which challenges students to reduce energy consumption, recycle, and promote resource conservation and environmental awareness. Hoover was the San Diego region's winner.

In addition to recycling and awareness efforts at school, Eco-Club students host local canyon hikes and clean-ups. Eco-Club and other community members, along with Project Clean, held a clean-up at Manzanita Canyon. Seniors from the Eco-Club also did recycling presentations at Escuela Longfellow in Claremont, encouraging the elementary kids to participate in recycling programs.

Last month Eco-Club's President, Rudy Vargas, was presented with the Next Generation Recycler's Award from the California Resource Recovery Association. Upon receiving the statewide honor at a staff meeting, Rudy shared the recognition with his fellow student environmentalists at Hoover. "I

couldn't have done this without them," he stated. "This is really our award."

As a result of their efforts in environmental stewardship, the club hopes to promote a legacy of environmental action and to inspire their peers and community to take action.

Scientists say that we only have ten years to reduce greenhouse gases before global warming becomes irreversible. Eco-Club members meet weekly on Wednesdays and all students are welcome. If other obligations prevent you from joining Eco-Club, here are some things everyone can do:

**Use a reusable water bottle** -- the annual amount of oil expended to produce plastic bottles sold in the US is enough to fuel 1,000, 000 cars for an entire year.

**Unplug your chargers** -- your cell phone, mp3 player or any electronic charger still uses energy when plugged in. You can also reduce thousands of pounds of carbon dioxide just by turning off electronic devices when not in use. You are also saving on your electricity bill.

**Reduce your waste** -- by reducing you garbage by 25 percent; you can reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 1,000 pounds per year.

**Bring your lunch in a reusable bag** -- it takes the same amount of oil to produce 14 plastic bags as it does to drive a car one mile, and takes even more energy to produce paper bags. Buy a canvas tote.



Eco-Club's president, Rudy Vargas (right), and faculty advisor Ted Hernandez. Rudy was presented with the Next Generation Recycler's Award from the California Resource Recovery Association.

**Encourage your family to recycle** -- by recycling your aluminum cans, unbroken glass bottles, cardboard, plastic and newspapers you can reduce your home's carbon dioxide emissions by 850 pounds per year.

**Get the word out** -- educate your friends and family on the dangers of global warming and what they can do to make a difference.

These are just some small things you can do to help make a huge difference. Go to [think.mtv.com](http://think.mtv.com) for other earth-saving ideas.

# Builder's Club: Building Up Your Community

By Diem Tran, Lisa Tran, and Markie Wynn  
Builder's Club Members, Monroe Clark Middle School

No, Builder's Club is not a wood shop class or a team of construction workers. Builder's Club is an organized group of students at Clark Middle who like to better their community and school. The Kiwanis sponsor Builder's Club so that we can do all kinds of service projects. During the holiday season we visit the elderly in retirement homes and sometimes do campus clean up. But our most notable service project is Pasta for Pennies where we collect money to fight leukemia and lymphoma. This year Pasta for Pennies took place from

March 3 through March 7. Students and teachers at Clark raised hundreds of dollars. As you can see, we really care about the community!

But Builder's Club doesn't only have a positive effect on the community or school, but also on the members. These kids spend their own time to help those who need to be helped. But they don't do it for nothing. They want to help others because they're caring and compassionate for others and are committed to their duties.

"We help the community in different ways, including cafeteria clean up



– I like that, it's fun," said Lisa, a member of Builder's Club. "I love Builder's Club because it's totally coolness," added Markie Wynn, another member.

Who are these wonderful people and how can you join? Builder's Club is made up of and only open to middle schoolers. Your local Builder's Club at Monroe Clark Middle School is advised by Mr. Roundtree. Meetings

take place every Wednesday in Room 170 from 12:15 to 1:00 PM unless stated otherwise. If you're a generous, caring and considerate person, don't hesitate to join! Just talk to Mr. Roundtree in Room 170. You'll be rewarded with the appreciation of your school and community, and sometimes we have a pizza party or two. It doesn't look too shabby on your resume, either!



# The Traditions of Tet, the Vietnamese/Chinese New Year

By Chau Lam, Guest Student Writer

Smoke fills the air and children cover their eyes as red firecrackers go off quickly ... in the middle of February. It sounds like a New Year celebration and it is, just using a different calendar. Though usually referred to as Chinese New Year, several versions of the Lunar New Year are celebrated in many Asian countries, including Vietnam, Cambodia, Korea, and Mongolia. In Vietnam the Lunar New Year is called Tet, and with its large population of Chinese descendants, it is celebrated by almost everyone. It is one of the most important annual occasions.

The day that the Lunar New Year falls on is determined by looking at a lunisolar calendar, whose date indicates the moon phase and time of the solar year. In addition, the New Year brings a new animal of the Chinese zodiac. For 2008, it is the year of the rat and the Lunar New Year day falls on the seventh of February. However, the new year is often celebrated up to a week before and a week after.

Lunar New Year is the time of year that brings together families through long-held traditions. The temples are often packed on the days before the New Year with peo-



According to tradition, the household gods who live in each home return to heaven on New Year. They report all that has gone on in the family to their master, the Jade Emperor. Legend says that they make this journey riding on golden carp, so some people leave an offering of carp in a bowl for them. The carp often then are released back into a pond or stream as a gesture of good will.



A woman prepares offerings to help assure good luck for the coming year. Sweet rice dishes, flowers, fruits and incense are traditions.

ple paying respect to their ancestors. Usually quiet and peaceful, temples on New Year are often really loud and smoky due to the large number of people and amount of incense that is burned.

Up to a week prior to the New Year day, many families visit their friends to catch up and reminisce on the past year. The children tend to go for a different reason: money. It is tradition for both Chinese and Vietnamese parents to give the children of their friends money in red envelopes (called lai shi in Cantonese and li xi in Vietnamese) to wish them good luck for the year and for good behavior. In addition, younger children tend to gather around the feet of the eldest person they can find and listen to him or her retell legendary stories that have been passed down through oral retelling for generations.

Maintaining traditions and spending time with family is the best part of the Lunar New Year.

As the day of New Year draws closer, communities will often celebrate together as one at festivals, fairs, and parades. At these community celebrations and welcoming for the Lunar New Year, there are often traditional decorations that are believed to bring prosperity, good spirits, and health into the lives of those who come. Some of the most recognizable decorations are the Koi

fish, which are often seen in paintings, and represent a surplus of money to get through the rest of the year. However, the most notable part of these celebrations is the presence of lion dances and the beating of large drums and cymbals to accompany them. According to tradition, the loud drumming and the aggressiveness of the lions will chase away bad spirits from the new year.

The Vietnamese Tet festival held by the Vietnamese American Youth Alliance (VAYA) was held this year on February 8, 9, and 10 at Balboa Park. The San Diego Chinese New Year Fair hosted by the San Diego Chinese Center (SDCC) was held on February 16 and 17 in the Asian Historic Thematic District. In between were countless parties and family gatherings that brought people together to celebrate history, traditions, and the New Year.



Children receive money in red envelopes to help start the new year with good luck

## The Year of the Rat

by Quyen Le  
Senior, Hoover High School



In February of 2008, Vietnamese and Chinese families celebrated the Chinese New Year. This year is the Year of the Rat, the first of the cycle. The rat is the symbol of the bringer and protector of prosperity. In China, being born a Rat is nothing to be ashamed of. The Rat is much respected and it is an honor to be born in the Year of the Rat. People born in the Year of the Rat are known for their charm, aggression, wealth, and order. They work hard to achieve their goals, acquire possessions, and are likely to be perfectionists. Rats are easily angered and love to gossip. Their ambitions are big, and they are usually very successful.

The Chinese say that others should always listen to the advice that the Rat gives, because of their intellect and problem solving skills. They can take on the issues at hand, see the big picture at hand, and make good judgments. Their wealth comes from their knack of being great money savers. Few Rats suffer financially because in tough times, they know how to make something out of nothing or make things turn out in their favor. They are most compatible with people born in the years of the Dragon, Monkey, and Ox. Their mortal enemies are Horses.

Recent Rat years include 1912, 1924, 1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, 1996, 2008

Enjoy the Year of the Rat!  
Happy New Year!



## The Lion Dance



Most people in City Heights have seen a Lion Dance thanks to the large Asian community with whom we share our schools and neighborhoods. Many people also know that the Lion Dance is performed to scare away evil spirits and bring good luck special events. But there is a lot more to the Lion Dance. Chris Nguyen, a Hoover student and member of the Hung Vuong Lion Dance team, explains this tradition that dates back over 2000 years:

*The Lion Dance is based on Kung Fu and Chinese martial arts, and is for scaring away evil spirits and bringing good fortune, and also carrying on our traditions and culture. It began in China and today there are three main styles based on different regions. The Fut San style comes from southern China and is more symbolic and ceremonial. There is also the Northern Style called Hung Gar. The third is Hok San, a popular modern style that involves daredevil stunts like climbing and jumping between wooden poles. The moves of the Lion Dance express different emotions of the lion, and different colored lion costumes also have different meanings, like wisdom, bravery, youth and ferocity.*

*Kids under 12 start out performing dressed as Chinese dogs and work their way up to the Lion Dance. I started about five years ago in martial arts and became interested in the Lion Dance because I wanted to do more than just go to temple with my family on New Year. Being on the Lion Dance team has meant lots of conditioning, strength training, and late nights of practice. It also has erased my fears and taught me responsibility because you have to work with your partner and not get injured. Falling not only can mean getting hurt, but also bad luck for the club and the place you are performing. We have performed all over San Diego – at special events, competitions, and people's homes and businesses.*

## What do You do on Tet?

On February 7, the first day of Chinese/Vietnamese New Year, I woke up to get ready for school and got \$5 in a red envelope from my parents. But first I had to wish them good luck to get it. Later I went to my friend's house where I wished my friend's grandma good luck and to live a hundred years. I got a red envelope with \$2.

On the next day I got a basket of candy and stuff with \$6.01 – it was so pretty. Later that day the Vietnamese families made a special lunch for the teachers at Rosa Parks Elementary. It was awesome – the food tasted delicious. I also received money from my friend Tony's grandparents, and from my aunt, and from my mom's friend.

On the last day of New Year we went to the Tet carnival in Balboa Park. It cost a lot to get in and for the rides, so I gave some of the money to my parents.

*Gia Tran, 5th Grade  
Rosa Parks Elementary*



Members of the Hung Vuong Lion Dance team give a martial arts exhibition at Hoover High's New Year celebration

For New Year I got \$399, ate lots of food, and got to go to a hotel called Barona. I went in the pool and it was very cold, but I stayed in for 3 hours anyway. My nephew stayed in for 4 hours. He did not want to get out and said he wanted to stay in for 10 hours, but his mom did not let him because it was time to go to the buffet. The next day we went to the Vietnamese Tet celebration in Balboa Park. I had lots of fun and played bumper cars two times. My nephew played on the slide 28 times!

*Alana, 5th Grade  
Rosa Parks Elementary*



Students perform a traditional Vietnamese dance at Hoover High's New Year celebration

For New Year I didn't really go anywhere. I just stayed home – but I still got money. The only places I visited were my grandpa's house and a buffet. This year I got \$200 but Stephanie said she got more than \$400! Some people think New Year is all about money, but I think New Year is about having fun and getting good luck. I wish all the adults good luck and to live long and have a Happy New Year.

*Anh-Thu, 5th Grade  
Rosa Parks Elementary*

On New Year I went to my uncle's house to say "Happy New Year" to my family. I also got money! We ate, played games, but most importantly, we are together as a family. The next night my dad took my mom, my brother and me to Barona. We ate so much my family and I were stuffed. On the last day of New Year we stayed home and had steak for dinner. I loved it so much because it

was cooked by my mom – I love home-cooked steak.

*Stephanie Phung, 5th Grade  
Rosa Parks Elementary*

On New Year's Day we had a party at my uncle's house. He bought a whole pig at a farm and my three uncles and my dad cooked it. All the people in my family and my family's friends came to eat the big pig. We gave what was left over to each other. The next day we went to the Vietnamese fair at Balboa Park. I saw my uncles and my grandma and grandpa at the fair. We took a picture of the whole family and will even send it to my family in Vietnam. My sister and I played games and rode the rides, and I even won a new tank for my pet turtle. We also bought things and went to see the people singing. My family was happy and enjoyed the happy New Year's Day.

*Tin Vuong, 3rd Grade  
Rosa Parks Elementary*



Vietnamese parents host a New Year lunch for teachers and staff every year at Rosa Parks Elementary to say thank you for educating their children.

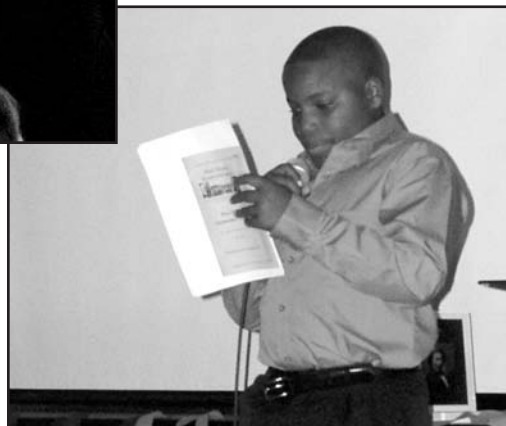


## Parent Centers Present Black History Programs

To commemorate Black History Month, the parent centers at Rosa Parks Elementary and Hoover High each organized Black History programs for their schools. The celebrations were both entertaining and educational as presenters and performers highlighted key times in the history of African Americans. Thanks to all those who helped organize these valuable events!



Hoover High's Black History event featured a one-woman play called "Eye on the Prize" which featured three first-person biographical accounts of the lives of three very different black women from different periods of US history: Maria Miller Stewart, who promoted rights for Blacks in the early 1800s with little success; Melba Beals, who was a member of the Little Rock 9, the students who braved school integration at Central High in 1957; and Bertha Rockefeller, a contemporary homeless woman who lived through the Civil Rights movement and still continues the struggle with optimism.



At the Black History celebration at Rosa Parks Elementary, the audience viewed an excellent slide show by the Parent Center's Laura Torres as students read facts about famous figures in black history.

## Some Important Events in Black History

In **1773** Phillis Wheatley, who is considered the founder of African-American literature, published her *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*.

In **1840** Benjamin Bradley developed the steam engine for warships.

In **1846** Frederick Douglass, one of the foremost leaders in the movement to abolish slavery, launches his abolitionist newspaper, *The North Star*.

In **1849** Harriet Tubman escapes from slavery and becomes one of the most celebrated leaders of the Underground Railroad.

In **1861** the Civil War begins. The war ended in 1965.

In **1881** Lewis Howard Latmer invented the electrical lamp.

In 1881 Spelman College is founded as the first college for black women in the U.S.

In **1881** Booker T. Washington founds the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute in Alabama. The school becomes one of the leading schools of higher learning for African-Americans.

In **1893** Daniel Hale Williams pioneered the first open heart surgery.

In **1896** George Washington Carver begins teaching at the Tuskegee Institute as director of the department of agricultural research, where he taught former slaves farming techniques for self sufficiency.

In **1900** Madame CJ Walker developed beauty and hair care products for African-American women, which made her the first black woman to become a millionaire.

In **1909** the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is founded in New York. W.E.B. du Bois was selected as its first director.

In **1914** Garrett Morgan invented the gas mask and the automatic traffic signal.

During the **1920s** and '30s The Harlem Renaissance flourishes. This literary, artistic, and intellectual movement fosters a new black cultural identity.

In **1940** Hattie McDaniel became the first Black woman to win an Academy Award for her supporting actress role in *Gone with the Wind*.

In **1943** the Tuskegee Airmen, an elite group of pilots, was the first all-black fighter squadron to take flight during WWII.

In **1947** Jackie Robinson breaks Major League Baseball's color barrier when he is signed to the Brooklyn Dodgers.

In **1954** the Supreme Court decision, *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* overturns Jim Crow laws by declaring that racial segregation in public schools is unconstitutional.

In **1954** Rosa Parks refuses to give up her seat at the front of a bus to a white passenger.

In **1958** Count Basie and Ella Fitzgerald were the first African-American male and female to win Grammy Awards.

In **1963** Martin Luther King, Jr. led a march on Washington for freedom and jobs for ALL Americans. About 250,000 people attended -- the biggest march ever seen in Washington. During this march, King delivered his famous "I Have a Dream" speech.

In **1963** Sidney Poitier was first Black man to win the Best Actor award for his role in *Lilies of the Field*.

On February 21, **1965** Malcolm X was assassinated.

In **1967** President Johnson appoints Thurgood Marshall to the Supreme Court. Marshall becomes the first African-American Supreme Court Justice.

In **1983** Guion Bluford became the first black astronaut to travel in space. And, in 1992 Mae Jemison became the first black female astronaut.

In **1993** Toni Morrison, a prolific and inspirational author, wins the Nobel Prize for Literature.

In **2004** Oprah Winfrey becomes the first African-American female billionaire.

# The Irish in America

Why do we celebrate St. Patrick's Day? Because during the period from 1820 to 1920, over 4,400,000 people emigrated from Ireland to the United States. In some eastern cities like Boston, New York, Chicago and Philadelphia, they made up 25% of the population, and accounted for nearly 10% of the total US population.

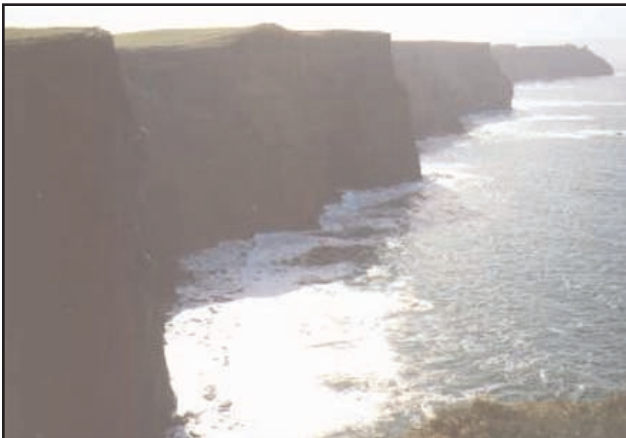
A large majority of the Irish who came to America did so because of the Irish potato famine that began in 1845. In 1816 only about 6,000 Irish people sailed for America. Between 1846 and 1850, the number coming to the US averaged over 200,000 a year. Nearly a million people died of famine and disease in Ireland during this time, and over two million sailed for the US. About one third of

Ireland's population died or emigrated. Ireland, once among the most densely populated countries of Europe, was decimated.

In the United States, thousands of new Irish immigrants helped build the railroads that opened up new parts of a growing nation. Some were able to save enough money to buy land and become farmers along the routes they had built. Others became coal miners and later factory workers in Pennsylvania and Ohio.

Not all were lucky enough to escape the overcrowded eastern cities. Many stayed in the city of their arrival because they could not afford to go elsewhere, and toiled in whatever menial jobs they could find. They also faced discrimination and many negative stereotypes. But with time many settled throughout the country, including California, and also in Mexico and Canada. Quite a few live in San Diego, and you may even see them every day at school.

Here are a few of our own Irish Americans and some of the traditions that have been passed down from the Emerald Isle.



The Cliffs of Moher on the coast of County Clare, Ireland, just south of Galway Bay.



**Chris Arreguin (McDermott)**  
Hoover High School

Both my great grandpa and grandma on my father's side came from Ireland. My sister did some research on them and believes they first went from Ireland to Canada, and then moved to Minnesota where I'm from. A lot of Irish went to places like Minnesota because they were farmers and the land was familiar to them. On St. Patrick's Day I wear green and eat corned beef and cabbage. My sister has visited the ancestral home of the McDermott clan in Ireland, and she also plays the harp and knows many traditional Irish songs. My husband is Mexican, and we enjoy teaching our daughter about both cultures.



**Bonnie Awes (formerly Mulrooney)**  
Monroe Clark Middle School

Although I do have some Irish blood, I mostly know about being Irish through my former husband who was 100% Irish and very proud of it. Both his grandparents and parents were Irish, and it was an important part of raising our two sons. They loved being Irish as children and are still proud of it as adults. On St. Patrick's Day they always took green treats to school for the whole class, and of course wore green outfits. At home we had a big party that we would start planning for in January. The most number of guests was about 125! We had corned beef and cabbage, a bagpipe player, lots of Irish music, green beer and green lights strung on the house. One year my husband and both sons got shamrock tattoos on their back sides, and when their uncle saw them, he and his sons got them too!

**Hank Sullivan**  
Monroe Clark Middle School



In my family, every St. Patrick's Day was a big event when everyone would get together just like on Thanksgiving. We would have corned beef and cabbage and Irish soda bread. I know a bit about my family history. My grandmother came to New York on a ship through Ellis Island alone at the age of 18. Someone had a ticket they couldn't use, and on the spur of the moment she decided to go. She stayed in New York for a short time, and then moved to Connecticut where she worked as a housekeeper. I even found her signature on the ship's manifest through the Ellis Island website. On the other side of my family, my great grandfather came to the US from Ireland during the American Civil War.

**Shane McCool**  
Rosa Parks Elementary



My grandfather, whose last name was O'Connor, came to the US from Ireland in the early 1900s. When I was growing up, my family's main tradition was celebrating St. Patrick's Day with my aunts and uncles who still all live in upstate New York. We would wear green and my mom would cook corned beef and cabbage even though she was Italian. I still wear green to celebrate, and used to go out that night since I lived right downtown, but now that I have a 7-month old, things are a little different. I also used to go to a bakery in Pacific Beach where they made Irish soda bread. My nephew, who was born on St. Patrick's Day, is named Finnegan McCool – you can't get much more Irish than that!

## I'm Looking Over a Four-Leaf Clover

By Cheyenne Kellis  
Rosa Parks Elementary School

Hey, did you know that in Ireland they call clovers "shamrocks"? The word shamrock means "little clover." Do you know why four-leaf clovers are so hard to find? They are rare because it is a genetic mutation that creates four leaves instead of three. This mutation only happens in one out of every ten thousand clovers. Have you ever found a four-leaf clover? If you have, boy are you lucky! Each leaf on a four-leaf clover has a different meaning. The first leaf stands for "faith," the second for

"hope," the third means "love" and the fourth is for "luck." So good luck and have fun picking clovers!





## New Year, Cambodian Style

While Chinese/Vietnamese New Year has already passed, the Khmer or Cambodian New Year is still a month away. Like in China and other countries of Asia, in Cambodia this is the year of the rat, but Khmer people celebrate in April instead.

The celebration of Khmer New Year begins on April 13 or 14 and lasts 3 days, although many centuries ago it began on the first day of the first month on the lunar calendar, like Chinese and Vietnamese New Year.

So what happened? In the 13th century during the Angkor Era a Khmer king changed New Year to the



Cambodian dancers perform at Angkor Wat, most famous of all Khmer temples.

fifth month of the lunar calendar, or April by the solar calendar. The holiday was changed because most Khmer were farmers who were busy harvesting their rice between November and March. Khmer farmers had more free time in April and could take a little vacation to enjoy the New Year festivities.

Usually, Khmer New Year is celebrated for three days, but sometimes it can last four days. On each day different traditions and rituals are observed. On the first day many people clean and decorate their houses, prepare food to bring to the monks at Buddhist temples, and play traditional games. On the second day, people give gifts to parents, grandparents and elders, and also make donations to the poor. The third day is for ceremonial baths, including the washing of Buddha statues, a tradition that young people use as an opportunity for huge water fights.

In City Heights, many Cambodians go to a big celebration at Colina Park where they watch traditional dances like the Coconut Dance, and enjoy traditional foods like papaya salad, sticky rice and kabobs.

## Easter in Mexico

Easter is a religious holiday observed by millions of Christians around the world. In Mexico, where a large majority of people are Catholic, Easter is an especially important time of year that begins with Lent and ends nearly two months later on Easter Sunday. At the heart of Easter celebrations in Mexico are two weeks of events surrounding *Semana Santa*, a celebration of the last days of the Christ's life, and *Pascua*, the celebration of Christ's Resurrection.

In every town and village, Mexicans participate in processions and ceremonies that mark different events in the life and death of Christ. Some communities present a full "Passion Play" in which residents recreate the last days of Jesus' life in full costumes with the whole city or town as their set. The enactments are often wondrously staged, costumed and acted, with participants preparing for their roles for nearly the full year. The reenactments in cities such as Ajijic and San Miguel de Allende attract visitors from around the world.



Here's what some parents remember about Easter when they were younger:

*Growing up in Guadalajara, I didn't know what American "Easter" was. We celebrated the religious holidays of Semana Santa and Pascua – there was no rabbit! We of course didn't eat meat on Good Friday, and on Sunday my family would go to church to commemorate the Resurrection. Afterward we had a family dinner of posole, tostadas, and other things.*

- Sandra Vazquez

*When I lived with my family in Chiapas we celebrated Semana Santa or Holy Week and everyone went to church. There were also family celebrations since relatives would come from far away to be together. There was a parade of all the children, and we would play games like lotteria. On Sunday we had a big dinner of Mole con Pollo or Mole Verde, tamalitos, atole, and other traditional foods.*

- Patricia Leon

*In the town where I grew up near Michoacan the celebration of Easter began on Ash Wednesday and we would not eat meat for 4 weeks of Lent. During Semana Santa, we would not take a shower until the Saturday before Easter Sunday. We observed many other rituals related to the Resurrection, like the washing of feet, and a simulation of the Crucifixion. Every family in the town would cook something and we would all eat together on Friday. On Saturday we would make a piñata and burn it as a symbol of Judas, and on Sunday everyone went to the Church.*

- Ester Pintor



March is  
SDSU  
Month  
*Celebrating minds  
that move  
the world*

### Upcoming Events

#### **Hamlet: Blood in the Brain**

March 12, 13, 14 and 15 at 8 p.m. March 9 and 16 at 2 p.m. Experimental Theater  
The Experimental Theatre presents Naomi Iizuka's adaptation of "Hamlet."  
Shakespeare's kingdom of Elsinore is relocated to the drug-ravaged, world of Oakland, Calif. in the late 1980s.

#### **Kyoto Laureate Symposium**

March 13, 9:30 a.m. Montezuma Hall  
Celebrate the lifetime contributions of the new Kyoto Prize Laureates, given to outstanding scholars in the areas of advanced technology, basic sciences, and art and philosophy. SDSU will welcome the advanced technology winner, Hiroo Inokuchi.

#### **Explore SDSU: Open House 2008**

March 15, 10:00 a.m. SDSU campus  
SDSU welcomes future, current and past Aztecs to campus for an amazing day of information and entertainment. An estimated 15,000 guests will roam the campus touring high-tech labs, information booths, dancing to live entertainment on two stages or just walking the campus and participating in our information fair with more than 150 interactive exhibits.



# What's New at School in the Park?

There's always something new at School in the Park, an innovative program at Rosa Parks Elementary and Hamilton Elementary that makes learning come alive for students in grade 3-5 through a partnership with the museums of Balboa Park. Each of the 10 participating museums has its own classroom and educators for Parks and Hamilton students. While many kids are happy to take a field trip to one of Balboa Park's museums, students from Parks and Hamilton spend up to a total of nine weeks exploring a standards-based curriculum at three or more different museums. That's a lot of opportunities for students to see, do and learn things they've never done before.

But now parents at Rosa Parks Elementary also have an opportunity to share in this unique educational experience. Through the school's Parent Academic Liason (PAL), they can participate in the new Parents at the Park program organized by coordinator Marilyn Levitan and assistant Natalia Hernandez.

Once a month parents travel by van together from Rosa Parks to Balboa Park where they join School in the Park director Susan Wachowiak for coffee, pastries, and an introduction to the program. They then visit different museum classrooms and participate along with their children in that day's lessons, activities and projects.

"Parents are very excited to see all that goes on in School in the Park," noted Ms. Levitan, who has coordinated four trips to the park so far this year. "We do have an orientation about the program at the beginning of the year, but this is much better because they can see the students in action. One parent thought that it



meant the kind of park with swings and a slide, and couldn't imagine how we could hold classes there."

Another new project that PAL is working on is a non-fiction library in Room 304 at Rosa Parks where students can check out books on the subjects they study at School in the Park. Ms. Levitan and Ms. Hernandez also coordinate additional parent-oriented programs including parent academic workshops, the kindergarten-based Success for Life program, a parent book club, and other events with the Rosa Parks Parent Center that help parents with academic subjects and community issues.

Both students and parents will find another new School in the Park item useful: its updated website. The new and improved site ([www.schoolinthepark.net](http://www.schoolinthepark.net)) has evolved from a small informational site to an interactive tool for teachers, students, parents and others. Several of the new features includes:

- \* the curriculum from all the participating museums.
- \* afternoon suggestions for activities that focus on writing (Units of Inquiry) and math standards
- \* parent involvement highlights through photos, comments, and an online newsletter
- \* student pages that contain student work
- \* links to sites that continue the learning at School in the Park
- \* English Language Learner Podcasts

Finally, students also get to experience the newest exhibition at Balboa Park, including the latest: A Day in Pompeii. For those looking forward to visiting it, students in Ms. Yehma's class have provided a preview.

Thanks to the PAL program, parents get to experience all the exciting learning opportunities of the School in the Park program



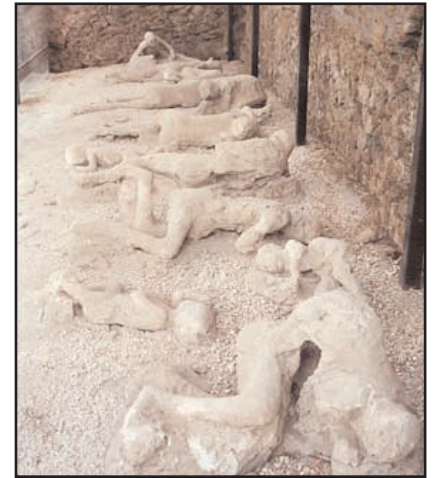
# The Last Day of Pompeii

By Christian Alvarado, Stacy Barrera, Cassandra Mendez  
and Raymundo Ruiz  
Ms. Yehma's Class  
Rosa Parks Elementary

At School in the Park our class got to go to an exhibit at the Natural History Museum called "A Day in Pompeii." Pompeii was a city in Italy where a volcano named Mount Vesuvius erupted in the year 79 AD. Ashes and poison gas exploded from the volcano and covered the town so quickly that the people were frozen like statues. More than 20,000 were killed as far away as 10 miles from Mount Vesuvius.

The town was buried for almost 2,000 years until it was discovered by accident. When they dug up the city they found people, animals, buildings, paintings, coins, jewelry, dishes and other stuff. To preserve the people they covered them in plaster so they wouldn't fall apart. Dogs, pigs and other animals were also found. The people were frozen doing different things like shopping, working, eating or sitting at home. The heat of the ashes locked them in place.

Some were frozen while trying to cover their faces or protect their children. Others tried to climb a tower or hide in a cave to escape, but it didn't work. Only people very far away survived.



We learned a lot about volcanoes and Pompeii. "I never knew much about volcanoes before," said Christian Alvarado, "but now I know much more about how dangerous they are. I thought lava just flowed out the top and people ran away from it."



Almost everything was preserved in Pompeii, like paintings, money and pets



Pompeii today after millions of tons of ash were removed



## Hoover Artists Break New Ground in Art Gallery Show

Students in Hoover High's Advanced Art class took a big step on February 23 with their first exhibition in a real art gallery. The week-long showing at Art Produce in North Park, which resulted in sales of student art totaling over \$1000, was a momentous occasion and a highlight in the evolution of a class that is striving not only to teach skills but also professionally exhibit them.

Facing the public was also a bit nerve-racking for the student artists whose work was on display.

"It was kind of scary," admitted student Ben McDonald. "In class we're like a family, so we're used to sharing our work with each other and getting input or critiqued. But this was a show for outsiders, and having them see our art is like letting them look through a window into our selves. It wasn't easy, but we need to do that as artists."

Others felt the same way.

"I was scared too," Gabriela Flores shared. "I had never shared my paintings with people outside of class, not even my family. But it feels good to know that others like your work, and it motivated me to keep going."

After the initial anxiety was over, fellow student Griselda Ramirez also found that comments from strangers inspired renewed dedication.

"I haven't been painting that long," she acknowledged, "and the gallery show was a big deal for me. Now I see that being critiqued is an important part of the process that helps you build skills and get better."

Of course, selling artwork also helped ease the fear!



Opening night for Hoover artists at the Art Produce gallery in North Park

"Without displaying my work at Art Produce, I wouldn't have been able to sell my paintings," added Angel Marquez. "I started thinking about that, and realized that I made more money selling paintings over the past two months than I got from my allowance from my parents in a year."

Teacher Ron Moya was not only impressed by the hard work students put into their pieces and the amount of art that was sold, but also on what students decided to spend the money on.

"I thought they would have spent it on teen stuff like CDs and pizzas," he remarked, "but each and every one used at least some of it to buy more art supplies. It shows me that their perception of art and the class has changed, and how much they care about art. This group eats, breathes and thinks art. One of the people who bought several pieces said that he didn't do it because he wanted to be nice and help some high school students, but because their work was good. The

gallery made them believers, and for me that's what school really should be about."

But gallery shows isn't the only thing art class is about. It also involves learning and working together in different ways.

"You don't have to worry about expressing yourself in this class because everyone does," explained Ben McDonald. "That doesn't happen in other classes that I have."

Other students noted differences too.

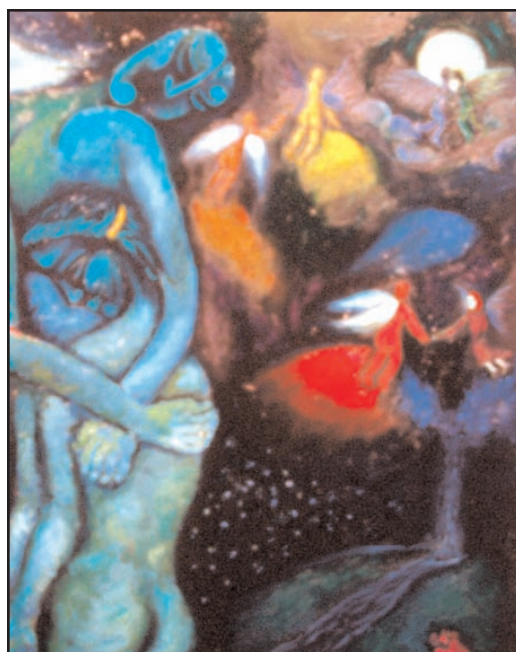
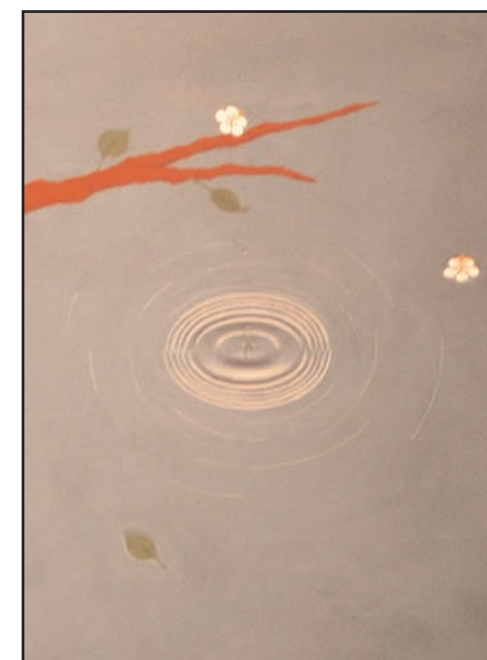
"In other classes there is pressure to complete assignments and do things only a certain way," said Angel Marquez. "That's part of the deal, but Art lets you relieve that pressure and do things in a more creative way."

Students soon will be using their creative talents in a new way: helping improve the appearance of the school. With help from Lynn Susholtz, an artist and teacher who owns the Art Produce gallery and made the student

exhibition possible, they will be surveying teachers from each academic discipline to come up with proposals for campus beautification. Ms. Susholtz, who worked with students and faculty last year on an amazing make-over of Clark Middle School's administration building as well as at other schools, plans to use their skills to dramatically improve the counseling and main office buildings, and also design some artistic signage to help students and visitors navigate the campus.

No set plans have been determined, but Ms. Susholtz has one idea in mind.

"When I first went into the front offices, I saw all those trophies in the display cases," she recalled. "They symbolize so many accomplishments, so much hard work, and such pride. Students at Hoover should be proud of their accomplishments and showcase them every day."





# CURRICULUM CURRENTS

## Clark Inducts New NJHS Members



Congratulations to the newest members of the Monroe National Junior Honors Society. On October 26, thirty-three seventh graders and sixty-five eighth graders were inducted in an official ceremony recognizing their outstanding academic and citizenship achievements.

The National Junior Honor Society, or NJHS, is an international organization that has been in existence for over 75 years with more than 14,000 chapters in 75 countries. It supports the educational goals of member schools, and provides opportunities for students.

Students at Clark are nominated by teachers and counselors based upon their high grade point averages (3.5 or above) and positive contributions at school. Students select officers and participate in a wide variety of activities that promote the NJHS standards of scholarship, leadership, service, citizenship, and character.

Monroe Clark Middle School is proud to support academic excellence through a variety of after-school activities and clubs. NJHS is one more way to recognize and reward students for their dedication, high academic goals, and commitment to making school a better place.

The newest inductees into the National Junior Honor Society at Monroe Clark Middle School are:

### House E 7th grade

Aguilera, Jahaziel  
Avila, Ashley  
Bueno, Melissa  
Cabrera, Jessenia  
Cortes, Eduardo  
Dominguez, Kimberly  
Fernandez, Deysi  
Gomez, Gloria  
Guadalupe, Celina  
Hernandez, Nallely  
Ho, Brian  
Huerta, Vianey  
Jimenez, Lizeth  
Le, Mai  
Lon, Vivian  
Lopez, Angel  
Luevano, Jennifer  
Mendoza, Gerardo  
Ngan, Chani  
Ngo, Richard  
Ojeda, Brenda  
Partida, Jonathan  
Phan, Denise  
Prom, Christopher  
Ramirez, Adriana  
Rodriguez, Bianca  
Rosas, Laura  
Tran, Diem  
Tran, Jimmy  
Tran, Lisa  
Williams, Jessenia  
Wynn, Markie  
Zuniga Mata, Catherine

### House B 7th grade

Diaz, Jose  
Garcia, Blanca  
Le, Van

Mingsing, Daisy  
Valerio, Verenice

### House D 7th grade

Aguirre, Manuel  
Alvarado, Jazmin  
Cruz, Jessica  
Duran, Alma  
Garcia, Candelaria  
Loek, Chanvibol  
Nguyen, Kimberly  
Romero, Horacio  
Tran, Dung  
Valdes, Daniela  
Xu, Jian

### House A 7th grade

Bradley, Jazmine  
Cabrera, Misael  
Cano, Efrain  
Casas, Joe  
Cozy, Diane  
Fabros, Amber  
Garcia, Gabriela  
Khun, Chris  
Lemus, Cindy  
Ramirez, Jesse  
Thadsbaythong, Judy  
Tran, Phu

### House C 7th grade

Castanon, Kimberly  
Castillo, Felipe  
Chandavong, Vadthana  
Chavez, Martin  
Cruz Aparicio Jr, Joaquin  
Cruz, Christina  
Estrada, Guadalupe  
Garcia, Jordan  
Mendez, Mayra

Moreno, Vannida  
Nguyen, Diane  
Paez, David  
Revollar, Martha  
Reyes Ponce, Lesley  
Rodriguez, Omar  
Ruiz, Olga  
Salgado, Jocelyne  
Salmeron, Mariela  
Thonglek, Kayla  
Urena, Adriana  
Villanueva, Jessica

### House A 8th grade

Banh, Mai  
Becerra, Cynthia  
Calvario, Rosa  
Cervantes, Marilyn  
Chang, Jose  
Chau, Emily  
Cruz, Karla  
Dominguez, Jorge  
Espinal, Priscilla  
Estrada, Jose  
Haro-Vazquez, Angela  
Hernandez, Sean  
Ho, Suong  
Ledesma, Doni  
Lopez, Paola  
Lua, Omar  
Maganda, Genesis  
Morales, Zachary  
Morales-Flores, Gustavo  
Moreno, Omar  
Nguyen, Amy

Ocampo, Giovanni  
Ortiz, Angel  
Perez, Javier  
Pina Sombbrero, Francisco  
Ramirez, Juan  
Rivera, Ricardo  
Rodriguez, Cecilia  
Sabory, Jessica  
Salgado, Carlos  
Sorn, Andy  
Vazquez, Martha  
Velasquez, Mercedes  
Villa, Karen  
Vo, Kerry  
Vo, Phuoc  
Xayasomloth, Donna  
Zambrano, Irving

### House D 8th grade

Alcazar, Andrea  
Carcamo, Roberto  
Carrillo, Dilan  
Cisneros, Monica  
Corral, Ana

Moreno-Valenzuela, Lilian  
Osuna Arias, Neftaly  
Vargas, Edgar

### House B 8th grade

Chi, Vania  
Contreras, Melissa  
Flores, Carla  
Gonzalez-Patino, Carlos  
Kam, Sawanee  
Khaleck, Steven  
Perez, Briana  
Romero, Jeffrey  
Souriyamath, Nicky

### House E 8th grade

Bui, Phillip  
Castro, Blanca  
Corado, Cielo  
Felix, William  
Fernandez, Salomon  
Filipovich, Tiffany  
Flores, Abigail  
Garcia, Gladys  
Hernandez, Miriam  
Huynh, Christine  
Lopez, Julian  
Ngov, Christopher  
Pham, Olivia  
Phan, Diann  
Salto, Erik  
Solis, Porfirio  
Truong, Phuong  
Wright, De'Leayah

### House C 8th grade

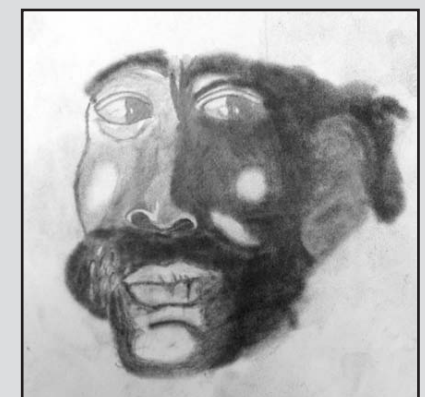
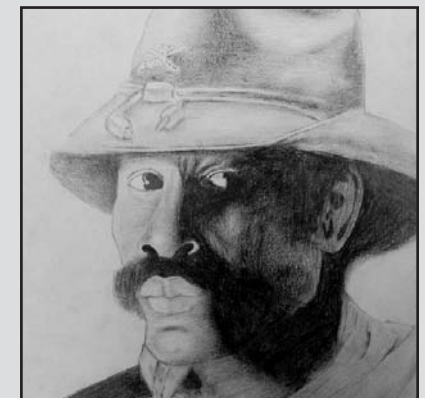
Cruz Vargas, Ernesto  
Gonzalez, Marlin  
Guerrero, Alberto  
Perez, Joanna  
Rodriguez, Adriana  
Sompasong, Steven  
Souriyamath, Natty  
Thorn, Ranny  
Zaragoza, Elida

### House A 6th, 7th and 8th grade

Carroll, Victoria  
De Los Santos, Rosa  
Godoy, Gregory  
Hernandez, Keven  
Jimenez, Jose  
Ortiz, Marco  
Rey, Marina

## Faces of Black History

Students in Frank McBride's art class at Hoover High used Black History Month as an opportunity to study Buffalo Soldiers, the former slaves, freemen, and black Civil War veterans who formed the first black peacetime regiment in US history.





## AVID Students: Leaders by Choice

By Ted Hernandez

12th Grade AVID Teacher, Hoover High School

**A**VID. Advancement Via Individual Determination. The AVID program at Hoover High School is filled with students determined to go to college, determined to improve their academic standing through rigorous coursework, and determined to take risks and try new things both in the classroom and outside it. They are presidents of clubs, captains of sports teams, and organizers of community projects.

AVID students organized the AVID Carnival at Hoover and canyon cleanups in City Heights, are part of the awesome BAHIA, Cardinals Interact, and Aaron Price programs, participated in the prestigious WorldLink Town Hall Meeting at the University of San Diego and the Step Up Program at San Diego State University, and have attended productions and workshops by the Mo'olelo Performing Arts Company. AVID seniors also recently collaborated with Hoover's Advanced Drama class, which includes many AVID sophomores and juniors, to write, produce, and direct a play based on their experiences, "Crossing the Line." Their story and performances received rave reviews.

Hoover's AVID program, with much work from students, staff, and administration, has grown from 75 students four years ago to 230 students today. It graduated its first senior class last year, and all but one of those students is attending college this year.

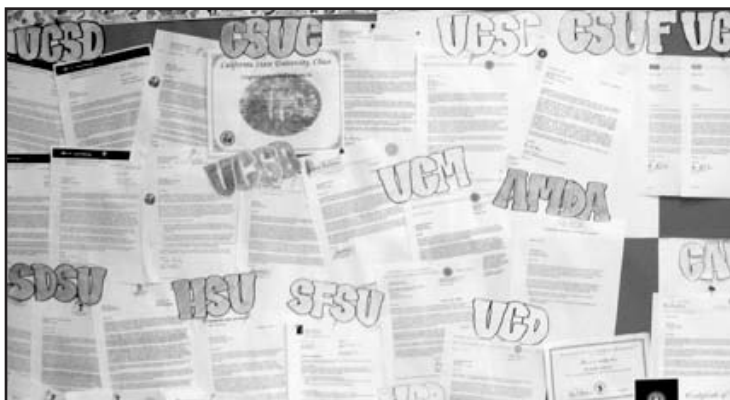
Seniors in the program have already received letters of acceptance from California State Universities across the state, as well as from New York University, Northern Arizona University, the University of

California Merced, and UC Riverside. They wait in anticipation for news from other UC and private schools in the next couple of weeks. The seniors recently visited UC Santa Barbara, ignoring the pouring rain to tour the campus and dine with students in the university commons.

Juniors are headed to Cal State San Marcos this month to attend the Freshman for a Day program to get a better understanding of college life. Later, they will visit UC Riverside and UC Irvine. Students are enrolled in the Step Up Program, taking an evening class at San Diego State, Intro to Social Work, and earning college credits. Juniors are also participating in the Junior Achievement program. All the while, they are writing personal statements and prepping for the spring's SAT and ACT college entrance exams, where they have 100% registration.

Sophomores visited UCSD in the fall and plan to visit Pt. Loma Nazarene University in spring. In the classroom, they are completing a nutrition unit. Students will write a report of information, design and produce pamphlets, construct a power point presentation, and present their findings to parents and the community. The freshmen class, part of the Compact for Success, are immersed in a social justice unit. They viewed Mo'olelo's "Permanent Collection," are researching Civil Rights leaders, and writing "poetry of oppression." They expect to visit San Diego State this spring.

AVID students are leaders by choice. They choose to work hard in class and out, preparing themselves for a successful life in college and beyond.



AVID seniors have quite a collection of college acceptance letters!

## Hoover High AOIT Films Featured at Festival

**H**oover High student film makers from the school's Academy of Information Technology made it to the big screen on March 11th at the San Diego Latino Film Festival. The film, a short documentary on the Border Angels organization by students Jose E. Flores, Jose Santos and Ricardo DeHoyes, was presented by the Media Arts Center San Diego as part of their Youth Visions program.

Youth Visions present an eclectic array of socially conscious documentaries and experimental shorts from media centers and schools throughout the country. Youth filmmakers from New York, Colorado, Los Angeles and San Diego offered their perspectives on important social issues such as immigration, racism and community violence that directly affect their neighborhoods, homes and lives.

Border Angels is an organization of volunteers who want to stop the unnecessary deaths of individuals traveling through the Imperial Valley desert areas and the mountain areas surrounding San Diego County. Many of these deaths have been the result of extreme heat and cold weather conditions, although racial discrimination has also been involved.

Border Angels was one of many short documentaries produced by teams of students in AOIT who showcased their creativity and academic and technical skills at the AOIT Film Festival at Hoover on February 8. Each film involved many hours of work, including research, story boarding, script writing, interviews, sets, locations, music soundtracks, and the advanced computer skills needed to put them all together.

"Most people don't understand how much work it takes to put even a five minute film together," noted AOIT director Ellen Towers, "but having a public exhibition of their work has really pushed students to work hard. Each grade has to do a film, so the film festival also shows students what is expected and the goals to shoot for as they move to the next grade."

This won't be the only opportunity for students to get their work on screen, however. Ms. Towers also hopes to put the skills of her student producers together with the acting experience of Hoover's Advanced Drama students to develop 30 second public service announcements. So stay tuned!

## hands on science



Wednesdays are science days in Mr. Greene's class at Rosa Parks Elementary. Students get to check out everything from cells under the microscope to sea slugs. "Hands on is the only way to do science," say Mr. Greene.



## Collaborative Concert Showcases Student Accomplishments

On March 5 music students from Rosa Parks Elementary, Monroe Clark Middle School, and Hoover High performed together for the first time in the Collaborative Cluster Concert. The program in Hoover's gym featured not only choir, band and orchestra performances by each separate program, but also first-ever combined performances.

The evening of music was a unique opportunity for students to see what they can look forward to in the future, meet the teacher they will have in coming years, as well as recall earlier times when they were just starting out with their instrument or on a riser in choir. It also gave students a chance to showcase their progress to parents, faculty and friends.

In addition, the concert highlighted the importance of arts at school. Few experts in education disagree, and thousands of books and studies have been written on how music and art improve children's chances of success in school, society and life.



Strings from Rosa Parks Elementary and Hoover High played together

Here are just a few of the benefits of education in the arts:

Increased self-esteem; the acquisition of job skills; and the development of much needed creative thinking, problem solving and communications skills;

Improved ability to think creatively, communicate effectively and work collaboratively, and to deal with ambiguity and complexity;

A broadening of students' understanding and appreciation of the

world around them and increased cultural literacy;

The skills learned through the arts transfer to study skills, communication skills, and cognitive skills useful in every part of the curriculum;

A 2004 Stanford University study showed that mastering a musical instrument improves the way the human brain processes parts of spoken language;

Students of the arts outperform their non-arts peers on the SAT, according to reports by the College Entrance Examination Board.

Millions of pages of material have been written on these subjects. Many contain detailed scientific research and the results of countless interviews, surveys and tests. While these all are important, below are what a few students had to say about their participation in instrumental music programs.

### *Beginning Band, Hoover High*



Hoover's Beginning Band performing at the Holiday Concert

**Anthony Nuno**

Instrument: drums

Years playing: first

*Band is the only class I really look forward to because it's more than just learning and playing music, it's fun. It's also a smaller class, so we get to know each other better. All the people in it are great – they all add something to the class. No offense, but as a sophomore, I wouldn't otherwise hang out with freshmen, but through Beginning Band I've gotten to know people like Javier and Hon Seng, and they're my friends now. I've only been playing for 6 or 7 months, and I never thought I'd learn this much in so short a time – we all have – and we're pretty darn good. Before this class I really never practiced or studied at home, but now I'm learning discipline, following an instructor and working hard for the first time.*

**Javier Hernandez**

Beginning Band

Instrument: alto sax

Years playing: first

Mr. Brown isn't like a lot of other teachers because he makes class interesting. But he takes it seriously – this class isn't a joke. Beginning Band also brings a lot of different people together – from different grades, different backgrounds. You get to know everybody, not just certain people, and you're friends with all of them.

**Hon Seng Tu**

Beginning Band

Instrument: baritone horn

Years playing: first

I like Beginning Band because of the people I've met. Everyone I hang out with at lunch are in band with me, and if it wasn't for them, I'd probably be eating lunch alone somewhere in a dark corner of the school. As a part of my education, the class has put me in closer contact with people and helped me get to know a teacher better -- that makes for a better school life.



Beginning Band members Anthony Nuno, Hon Seng Tu and Javier Hernandez



## Hoover High Orchestra

**Michael Pelayo**

Instrument: violin (2 years)

*The difference between Orchestra and other classes is that they are about individual performance, but Orchestra is about working together to sound good. No matter how good one individual is on their instrument, what really matters is how you perform together. It's always a challenge when we start a new piece and have to learn it together, but you can hear how we improve, and get better and better through the year. Since we are a small group, you get to know students better, interact with them more, and since I'm a section leader, I also help other students in the class. But it's more than just learning the notes to play – this year we've learned a lot about music theory and different composers in addition to performances. There are also activities outside of class, like going to festivals, concerts, and performances at Clark and Wilson middle schools. It's a fun experience. You*



*have to be dedicated and strive to improve, and this gives you a better attitude in other classes.*

**Kathy Madriga**

Instrument: viola (3 years)

*I like Orchestra because there are people who have the same passion for music and dedication. You get to know other people's strengths and weaknesses, how to help each other and learn from each other so that you can be successful as a group. I practice a lot at home because I want to get better, and I'm a section leader, so I have to be dedicated and set a good example. There's also a competitive side to Orchestra because I have to keep up with the other first chairs in violin and cello. We all have to keep up our skills, be on the same level, and hold together our sections so that we become like pieces of a puzzle that fit together. Studies have shown that learning music improves your intelligence and helps you think differently. In Orchestra things are flying at you and you have to be able to adjust and figure things out quickly. I also think it helps with getting into college and getting scholarships. I want to be a music major, and playing viola will help because it's a difficult instrument and not that many people play it.*



## Clark Middle Band and Orchestra



**Jonathan Partida**

Instrument: violin and guitar

*Orchestra isn't like other classes. Because I love music, it's always fun and interesting for me. Sometimes I'll play guitar for two or three hours straight and the time just flies by. I push myself to learn more and get better, but it doesn't feel like work at all.*

**Richard Walker**

Instrument: violin

*I like Orchestra now but I didn't like the violin in the beginning and wanted to switch, but now that I've learned songs and gotten better, I like it more. Today we are going to Point Loma Nararene College to play at a music festival.*

**Genesis Maganda**

Instrument: percussion

*When I'm in a bad mood I play the piano or listen to music and it takes my stress away. I also like playing the*

*snare drum and learned a lot about keeping tempo – if I rush, the rest of the band will rush too. Band also involves math and fractions, and also the history of when and why a composer wrote something, and what sort of feeling he put into the music. Another thing about band is facing your fear when you have to perform on stage in front of a lot of people. I think that helps with confidence, public speaking, or even job interviews.*

**Rosa Calvario**

Instrument: French horn

*Band involves many school subjects like math, foreign languages, history and the cultural background of where the music comes from. It's also very interesting because we go on to music events and the Forum Festival in LA where we are judged along with other school bands. Last year we also got to meet a famous pianist.*

## Music Programs Growing at Rosa Parks Elementary

As the audience saw at the recent Collaborative Concert, choir and instrumental music programs at Rosa Parks Elementary are growing! The band and strings classes taught by Chris Lea have increased by 100% over last year and now have twenty students in fourth and fifth grade in each group. The choir, also for fourth and fifth grade, has more than seventy-five.

Both programs are benefitting from the this year's expansion of music class to Kinder, first and second grade. These young musicians are taught by Annette Kover, who provides students with a basic knowledge of music, reading notes, and general principles that they can apply to the fourth grade recorder class and fifth grade band and strings class taught by Mr. Lea, as well as her own choir class.

Both Mr. Lea's and Ms. Kover's programs are aimed at developing the skills that students need to successfully pursue in music in middle and high school.

"Choir is a real class where my students have to practice and be prepared," explained Ms. Kover. "It's not as easy as singing along with the radio in the car or your bedroom. I teach proper posture and breathing techniques, pitch control, warming up, and being ready to perform as responsible musicians on state."

Mr. Lea, who has played flute since he was 8 and saxophone since middle school, similarly works on getting students ready for middle school band or orchestra. This can be a challenge since most students have never played a musical instrument before, and Mr. Lea must teach each of the six band instruments at the same time!

"At a minimum by the end of the



Annette Kover conducts the combined Rosa Parks-Hoover choir

year," he said, "I hope to have the students reading music on a basic level, knowing several notes on their instrument, carrying a simple tune on their own and successfully being part of the ensemble. Once the body of students have gotten a hold of the basics, a deeper understanding of music can occur and they can start expressing themselves."

Although progress can sometimes seem slow for new band members, at the Collaborative concert their progress since their first performance in December was impressive.

"I am always very proud of the efforts these students make," Mr. Lea stated. "The best part of my job is watching them discover for themselves the joy of playing music."



# PARENT PAGES

## Parent Receives Recognition

Congratulations to Monroe Clark Middle School parent Sara Barazza who received statewide recognition on March 8 at the California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE) conference in San Jose. Mrs. Barazza was presented the Honorable Mention award as runner-up in the Parent of the Year program.

The award was based on her many contributions to the school and the leadership she provided to ELAC, the English Learners Advisory Committee, a parent organization that serves as the advisory body to the school on key issues including the school plan for English learners, needs assessments, and efforts to make parents aware of the importance of attendance.

In addition to her duties as ELAC president, Mrs. Barazza started the school's Mexican Independence fiesta to celebrate both old and new contribu-



tions of the Mexican culture and its people. Through selling food and other items at the event, she raised money that was used to start an ELAC scholarship for Hoover High students.

The CABE conference was attended by parents, teachers, professors and educators from throughout California, including a group from Clark Middle. Mrs. Barazza was also on hand to personally accept her award.

## New Grants Support Parent Programs

Parents at Monroe Clark Middle School have new opportunities to learn thanks to two grants awarded to the school this year. One is "Plaza Progreso A-Z," a program made possible by a \$14,000 grant from the Institute of Mexicans Abroad Binational Educational Initiative and supported from the Mexican Consulate in San Diego. Parents and other adults from the community attend classes in literacy, elementary and secondary education, GED preparation, and computer skills.

There are about 20 to 25 parents enrolled in different levels of classes through the Plaza project at Monroe Clark, including a GED program.

"One of the goals of the program is for each parent to advance to the next level," explained Laura Angel-Zavala, director of Clark's parent center. "If

they don't know how to read, they would learn. Then they would continue with their elementary education, and so on. The idea is for them to continue learning more."

Most of the participating parents are not only learning new things, but also feel better about themselves and can share in education achievement along with their children.

The second grant from the State of California is to support anti-violence activities at Clark such as the school's successful Parent Patrol and Parenting Wisely workshops for parents who want to learn how to work through a wide variety of issues and concerns with their children. For more information on either program, contact the Monroe Clark Middle School parent center at (619) 563-6801, xt. 2315.

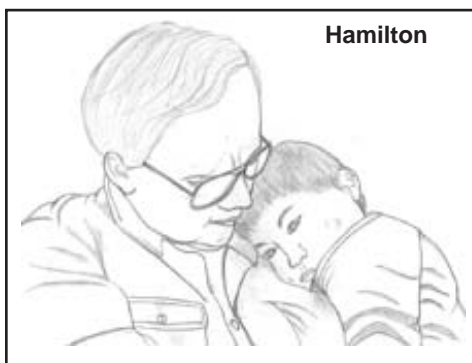
## Dads Club: The Word is Out

The news of Dads' Clubs at Rosa Parks Elementary, Monroe Clark Middle School, Florence Joyner Elementary, and Hamilton Elementary is spreading. The attendance at all four Dads' Clubs is slowly increasing largely due to dads telling other dads, and moms supporting their efforts. As a Dads' Club member, it is each member's duty to spread the news about the club and the meetings. Continual efforts are made to capture the support of the moms.

The Dads' Club is actively seeking partners to join them in building a Dads' Club that is matched by no other. Already on board is Dovetail

Marketing in Encinitas, Subway Sandwiches in City Heights, owned by Marc Gates, and Jamba Juice, where Basil Muhammad is the General Manager. Jamba Juice and Subway continue to support the Dads' Club in each of the four schools with gift certificates and coupons for free products from their stores. Dovetail marketing recently donated over \$3,000 worth of products to be raffled off to the participants of the Dads' Club meetings.

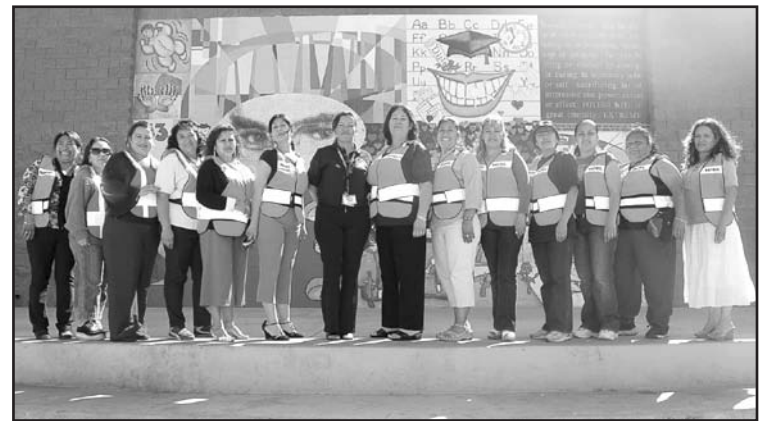
Recently the Dads' Club conducted a logo contest open to everyone at each school, including teachers. Below are the logos that placed 1st at each school:



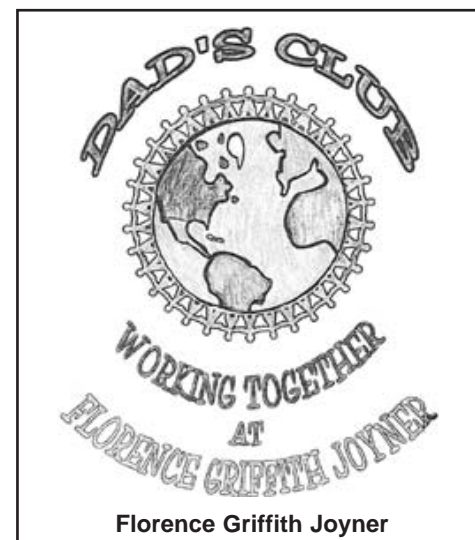
Hamilton



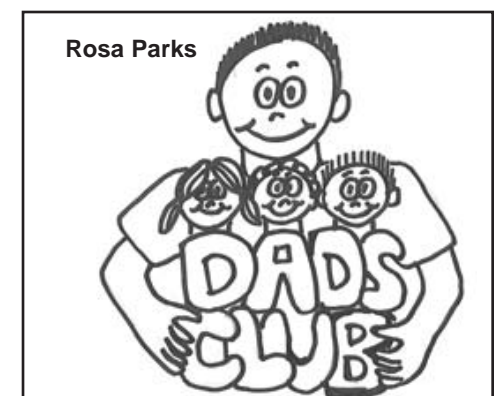
Clrk



The Parent Patrol of Clark Middle School



Florence Griffith Joyner



Rosa Parks

Next Dads Clubs:

Monroe Clark- 3/11/08 & 4/15/08,  
Florence Joyner- 3/13/08 & 4/17/08,  
Rosa Parks- 4/24/08,  
Hamilton- 4/29/08



# teacher topics

## TEACHER TOPICS

### Hoover High Welcomes New Vice Principal

Vice Principal Elba Vera is new to Hoover High School, but she certainly isn't new to education. Ms. Vera has spent over 12 years as a teacher and administrator in San Diego schools, and holds a Bachelor's degree in economics with minors in French and Portuguese, a secondary teaching credential, and a Master's degree in Educational Leadership. Along the way she has been a teacher and VP in middle and high schools from Chula Vista to Scripps Ranch, a migrant education teacher, student teacher supervisor, parent translator, and dozens of other duties.



Ms. Vera at SDSU graduation with her mom

How did Ms. Vera achieve so much? By setting goals and reaching for her dreams.

"I had a goal in high school," she explained, "to go to college, to better myself, to make myself and family and friends proud. What helped me was that my parents did everything they could to get a good education for me, even though they didn't go to college themselves. I saw them reading every night, learning new things and always trying to improve themselves. They motivated me to do the same. They always told me, 'We can't give you lots of money because we don't have that, but we can give you education – that is the most important treasure we can give.'"

But support from her parents didn't mean life was easy. Ms. Vera's family moved from Mexico to Chula Vista when she was in junior high, and she had to learn English in school. Because both her parents worked, she also had to come home and cook for a family of seven – her parents, three brothers and sister. She was shy but excelled in academics, especially math and French,

and she dreamed of going to France one day to experience first-hand all the things she learned in class.

After high school she went to SDSU where she took business classes that continued her love of math, and also kept studying French. Graduation from college was a proud moment – she had reached her goal. But the reality of the job market for new college graduates was more disappointing. There were few jobs available where she could really apply all that she had worked so hard to learn.

There was a demand for math teachers, however, so Ms. Vera took on a new challenge: getting her teaching credential. After student teaching at Chula Vista Junior High and Sweetwater High, she was ready to start a new career with credentials in Spanish and Math. But first it was time to fulfill another dream – going to France. After a month visiting France, Monaco and other places in Europe with a friend, she returned to find a job opening at Memorial Junior High. While teaching Algebra and Geometry at Memorial she earned a Master's degree in education from SDSU, and

soon moved up to vice principal at Roosevelt Middle School, followed by a teaching position at Scripps Ranch High, and VP at Oak Valley Middle in Poway.

Now that she is at Hoover, Ms. Vera has new goals.

"I'd like to have contact with as many parents as I can," she stated. "I want to get to know them, tell them that Hoover is here to help, but also to encourage them to be partners with us. A big part of why students succeed, and why I succeeded, is through support from parents. If we can help them do that, and sometimes it means helping them provide more structure and motivation at home, then our students can reach all their own goals and dreams."



Ms. Vera in Monaco

### Sixth Grade Poetry Corner

*Middle school is a time of emotional change for young people as they begin to feel more complex emotions and also feel them more intensely. If you're not a middle school student, teacher, counselor, or parent, you may not remember exactly what it's like to feel all these new sorts of emotions -- sometimes within the same day, or the same hour! But it helps to express how you feel, what you are thinking about, and how you perceive the world around you. Poetry is a great way to do this or to experiment with different emotions. Some student from Monroe Clark Middle School bravely share their poems.*

#### What's Mine

Nereyda Dela Cruz Guzman  
6th Grade – Clark Middle School

This is my poem,  
This is my life,  
This is my heart.  
It's what I feel,  
It's the world where I live.  
Or in my house safe,  
Seeing from my window.  
Then the blue sky,  
Also the bright yellow sun.  
The world will have rocks in the way,  
But I will jump over them,

Seeing what I never had before.  
Following my path.  
Fighting for my future,  
Being a daughter of God.  
Being a princess I never saw in me,  
Being afraid of awful things,  
Confused in my very mysterious dreams.  
Living my life,  
Having my imagination,  
Trying to complete goals.  
This is my poem,  
This is my life,  
This is my heart.

#### My Favorite Place

Gloria Ford Neely  
6th Grade, Clark Middle School

When I dream  
I have many favorite places  
that surround me.  
One of my favorite places  
is in a land all by myself  
with people who care about me  
and themselves.  
If I am alone  
that means I am in  
my favorite place.  
My dreams.  
When I am dreaming  
nobody can bother me  
or tell me what to do.  
My favorite place  
is when I am sleeping  
and in my mind I am far away  
from trouble and pain and no more  
worries.  
No other place  
can take away my dreams  
from being my favorite place.

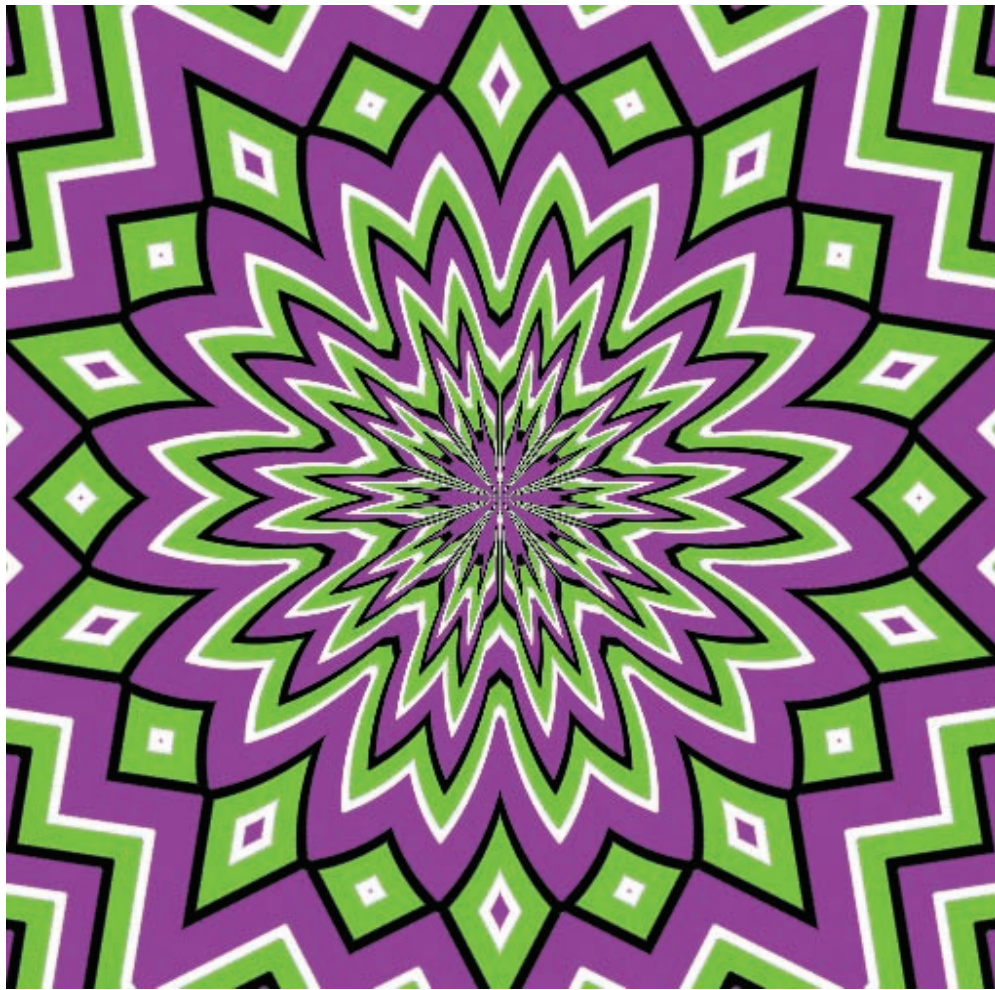
#### Dreaming of You

Estefania Arias  
6th grade, Clark Middle School

When I am laying on my bed  
I think of you  
When I am sleeping  
I dream of you  
After you left me and I couldn't  
sleep  
Then I called you  
You didn't answer me  
Someone told me you were kissing  
Someone else but I didn't believe  
them  
When I was walking  
Thinking about what that person told  
me  
I saw you with another girl  
I hate you  
Even though I told you I hate you  
I still dream of you  
And I still love you



# FUN ZONE



The creator of this illusion called it "Sea-Sick" -- it's easy to see why!

## JUST FOR LAUGHS

- WHAT HAPPENED TO THE FROG'S CAR?  
IT GOT TOAD AWAY!
- WHY DID THE DINOSAUR CROSS THE ROAD?  
BECAUSE CHICKENS WEREN'T INVENTED YET.
- WHAT DO YOU CALL A FISH WITH NO EYES?  
FSH!
- WHAT'S THE WORST ANIMAL TO PLAY CARDS WITH?  
A CHEETAH!
- WHAT DO YOU CALL A FAKE NOODLE?  
AN IMPASTA!
- WHAT DID THE FISH SAY WHEN IT RAN INTO A WALL?  
DAM!
- HOW MUCH DOES IT COST FOR A PIRATE TO GET EARRINGS?  
A BUCCANEER.
- WHERE DO YOU FIND A TORTOISE WITH NO LEGS?  
WHERE YOU LEFT IT.
- WHY WASN'T CINDERELLA VERY GOOD AT SOCCER?  
BECAUSE SHE KEPT RUNNING AWAY FROM THE BALL!!
- WHAT DO YOU CALL A DOG WITH NO LEGS?  
DOESN'T MATTER - HE'S NOT COMING ANYWAY!
- ONE MAN SAID TO THE OTHER, "MY DOG'S GOT NO NOSE." THE OTHER MAN SAID, "HOW DOES HE SMELL?" AND THE FIRST MAN SAID, "TERRIBLE."

## Chilly Chuckles

- Q: What's the difference between an iceberg and a clothes brush?  
A: One crushes boats and the other brushes coats!
- Q: Why is the slippery ice like music?  
A: If you don't C sharp - you'll B flat!
- Q: What kind of math do Snowy Owls like?  
A: Owlgebra.
- Q: How do you tell the difference between a walrus and an orange?  
A: Put your arms around it and squeeze it. If you don't get orange juice, it's a walrus.
- Q: What eight letters can you find in water from the Arctic Ocean?  
A: H to O! (H<sub>2</sub>O)
- Q: What do you call a polar bear wearing earmuffs?  
A: Call it anything you want - it can't hear you.



Bear Hunt: how many bears can you find in this picture? There are at least eight!

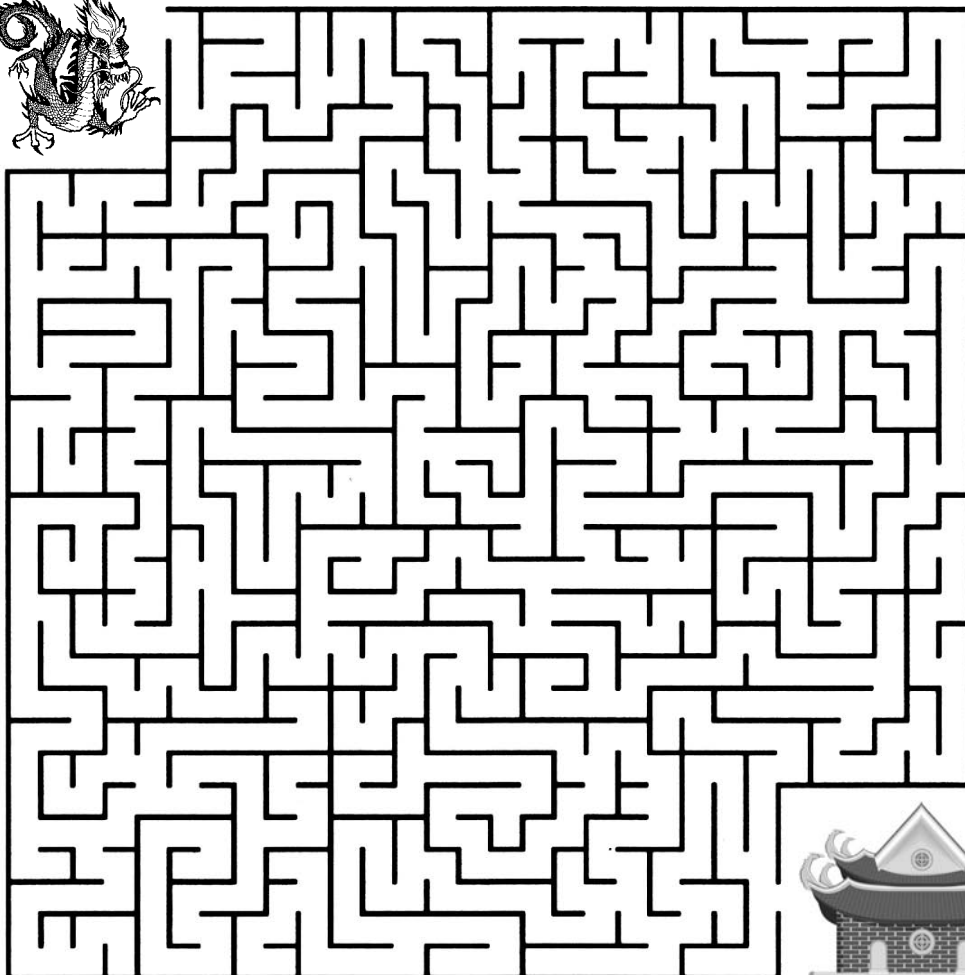
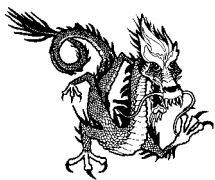


## Mountain Mystery?



Notice anything unusual about the mountain behind the famous South American ruins of Machu Picchu? If not, turn the picture counter-clockwise 90 degrees. Is what you see a trick of shadows, or is there more to this magic mountain? Built by the Incas of Peru in the early 15th century, Machu Picchu is believed to have been used for religious ceremonies and astronomical observation, and also may have been a sanctuary for Inca emperors. Some of the blocks of stone used to build the city weigh as much as 50 tons. But the Incas did not use wheels for transportation. So how did they move those huge blocks?

Help the dragon get to the temple for New Years



## Did You Know?

### Why the Groundhog Has its Own Holiday

Many of the first European settlers to arrive in Pennsylvania were from Germany. They brought with them a centuries-old tradition known as Candlemas Day, which originated in England or Scotland. On Candlemas Day, clergy would bless candles and distribute them to the people, maybe to give them a light of hope that winter now was half over. The weather on Candlemas Day was considered an important indicator of the weather to come. According to an old English song:

*If Candlemas be fair and bright,  
Come, winter, have another flight.  
If Candlemas brings cold and rain,  
Go, winter, and come not again.*

So if it's sunny on Candlemas, more winter, and if it's cloudy, spring is coming early. Then where does the groundhog come from? Groundhogs hibernate during the winter, and hibernating animals were often used in folklore to predict the coming of spring since they were thought to have superior instincts about changes in seasons. If you see a hibernating animal come out of its burrow, spring must be just around the corner!

Germans traditionally looked for hedgehogs, badgers or even bears coming out of their winter burrows, but there weren't many to be found where they settled in Pennsylvania. But there were plenty of groundhogs. The Indians believed the groundhog, or woodchuck, was a wise and sensible animal, so it was substituted for the hedgehog or badger.



Somewhere along the way, the traditions or superstitions of Candlemas and keeping an eye out for hibernating animals got mixed together. If the sun was shining, the groundhog would see its shadow, and that meant six more weeks of winter. If it was cloudy, then there would be no shadow, and winter would end early.

In the U.S., the "official" groundhog is kept in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania.

Every February 2, amid a raucous celebration early in the morning, "Punxsutawney Phil" as the groundhog is called, is pulled from his den by his keepers, who are dressed in tuxedos. Phil then whispers his weather prediction into the ear of his keeper, who then announces it to the anxiously-awaiting crowd.

Of course, this is for show. It's a fun celebration and a great tradition. But Phil's keepers secretly decide upon the "forecast" before they drag Phil out of his burrow!

The funny little groundhog  
Digs a home in the fall,  
And hides there all winter  
Rolled up in a ball.  
On February 2nd  
He comes out of there  
To look at the sky  
And to sniff the air.



# STUDENT ART SHOWCASE



Mayra Montero, a 6th grader at Clark Middle School, has been interested in art since she was at least six years old. With encouragement from her father and sister, who are both good artists, she has pushed herself to improve and take on increasingly difficult subjects.

“I remember that I liked drawing horses when I was little,” she recalled, “and then moved on to things like stars and moons. Later I began to draw people’s faces, and was helped by my dad, who does portraits of our family. With

practice and guidance from my dad I learned how to draw the rest of the body, and about shadows and shading.”

Like other young artists, Mayra is now interested in anime and fantasy subjects, sometimes taking a month to complete a single work. Although she enjoys drawing and would like to learn more about photography, she sees art as more of a hobby than a career. But when she sells her first drawing, she may change her mind...

## City Heights Collaborative Chronicle

The *City Heights Collaborative Chronicle* is a publication of the City Heights K-16 Educational Collaborative, a groundbreaking partnership of San Diego State University, San Diego Education Association, San Diego Unified School District, Price Charities, and three City Heights schools—Rosa Parks Elementary, Monroe Clark Middle and Hoover High.

The goals of the Collaborative are:

- Improve literacy and increase student achievement.
- Identify and address barriers to academic success
- Enhance the quality of teachers and educational personnel
- Demonstrate leadership in the management and administration of schools.

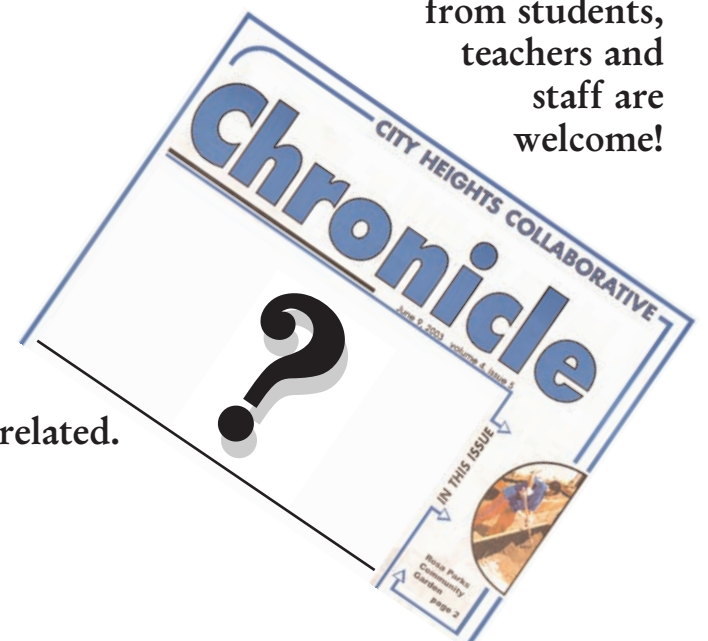
The content of the *Collaborative Chronicle* reflects the numerous innovative strategies of the City Heights Educational Collaborative, as well as the many other positive attributes of these schools and their students, staff and teachers.

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