

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*

Dawn of a New Day



The new school year began with many changes and new opportunities for the partners of the SDSU City Heights Collaborative. But one thing hasn't changed -- working together to ensure a bright future for all students.

Cover: Members of the Hoover High JROTC Cardinal Pact program begin each school day at 6:00 AM, demonstrating their commitment to success. See page 3 for more.

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Kinder Return to Rosa Parks Campus

After eight years at the Kinder Annex at Hoover High, the Kindergarten and preschool classes at Rosa Parks Elementary have finally returned to the main campus. Although the move meant overcoming some challenges, the school is back to the way it was meant to be.

The Kinder Annex at Hoover was a solution to overcrowding at Rosa Parks which opened in 1997 with hundreds more students than it was designed to hold. The school was bursting at the seams, so a plan was devised to turn a parking lot at Hoover High into a separate Rosa Parks campus using portable classrooms. The Kinder Annex was to be temporary until new elementary schools could be built in City Heights. With the opening of Florence Griffith Joyner Elementary this fall, enrollment at Rosa Parks was reduced, allowing the Kinder and preschool classes to return.

A separate school site for Kinder had both problems and advantages. On the negative side, teachers and students had to take a bus back and forth from Rosa Parks to the Annex every morning and afternoon, and getting to the nurse or counseling office was much more difficult. On the positive side, the Annex had its own library, lunch room and eating area, multipurpose room, and playground. It also provided a closer sense of community for the school's youngest students, and many Hoover students helped in classrooms as part of internships and service learning.



Teacher Hilda Martinez leads her kindergarten students to class at Rosa Parks Elementary.

One of the biggest problems of coming back was the need to move more than 90% of last year's classrooms to make room for the Kinder and preschoolers and to have each grade level together in the same building.

"It's absolutely been worth all the work," observed Rosa Parks principal Peggy Crane. "Having everyone on the same campus is so much easier for parents and staff, but it was a huge project that meant many hours of work for our custodians and teachers."

Once the many moves were completed and students had settled in, Kinder teachers began to notice the advantages of being on the main site again. No more buses every day, easier access to the many types of support provided at the campus, seeing former stu-

dents and how much they have grown, and better communication and collaboration with administrators and fellow teachers.

"I definitely like the convenience of being here again," observed teacher Pam Forde, who had spent a year at Rosa Parks Elementary when it first opened before moving to the Hoover Kinder Annex. "There are no more buses, but besides that, there are more people to help, whether it's through the health center if a student is sick, or just someone who can watch your class if you need to talk to a parent for a few minutes. Those things make me feel safer and more connected."

On the other hand, Rosa Parks has much more traffic than the Annex, and there are always activities of one kind or another going on.

"There's certainly more happening here," observed teacher Ann Marie Gasparine, whose new classroom is close to the main courtyard, "and people stop by just to say hello or chat for a minute -- that didn't happen as much at the Annex."

Although the Rosa Parks campus is busier than the Annex was, the overall "shrinking" of the school has made it much quieter than before, when it was home to more than 1400 students.

"The pain of downsizing was the loss of students and staff, many who had been here for a long time," reflected Principal Crane. "We were expecting

Joyner Elementary to open last year, so for quite some time there was tension about how many students we would lose, which teachers would stay, and it understandably caused some anxiety. But now the changes that had been hanging over our heads have been implemented and enrollment is about 1000 students."

As a result, Rosa Parks Elementary is no longer the largest elementary school in San Diego County, a title that everyone is glad to relinquish. There is now space for a new Health Center, larger Parent Center, a new music room and teacher lounge, and separate areas for SAY and 6 to 6.

"The smaller enrollment makes administration of the school easier, and creates a better environment for students, teachers, parents and staff," noted Ms. Crane. "We don't have to spend as much time on issues of day-to-day operations and managing such a large school. Instead, we can focus more on teaching and learning, and a providing the best instruction for our children."



The transition was also made easier through the support of Price Charities, which helped completely remodel the new Parent Center and Health Center. Lois Miller and her crew from Price Charities contributed labor, painting, furniture and supplies. But even more positive changes are on the way!

Ms. Crane hopes to renovate the Kinder playground, add several display cases for student work, a new electronic marquee in front of the school, and even a new flag pole. She invites all community members to visit the campus any time. "I think you'll be amazed by the changes and we're always happy to have friends and family drop by!"



Preschoolers at Rosa Parks Elementary enjoy the Kinder playground for the first time

Hoover 9th Graders Guaranteed SDSU Admission

Hoover High 9th graders recently learned that they will be the first freshman class to have an opportunity that no other Hoover High students have had before. Through presentations at Hoover by SDSU's Lou Murillo, they discovered that they will be guaranteed admission to San Diego State University through a program called the College Avenue Compact if they meet the general requirements of the California State University (CSU) system.

They also learned of the many benefits of having a college degree, including the ability to earn a lot more money and a much wider number of career options.

"My father worked in a steel mill," recalled Mr. Murillo, who is director of SDSU's Compact for Success, a guaranteed admission program between Sweetwater Union High School District and SDSU that started in 2000. "I thought I probably would end up doing that too, and didn't really think about going to college. But luckily some of my friends decided to apply, so I did too."

Many Hoover 9th graders probably haven't thought much about college either, and are not exactly sure what it is all about. But not for long. Through the College Avenue Compact, they will learn everything they need to know. Hoover High, SDSU, and the City Heights Educational Collaborative will work together to provide support that includes:

- ♦ Presentations on what college and requirements are all about
- ♦ Parent and student visits to SDSU



SDSU's Lou Murillo with Hoover High 9th graders



Through the College Avenue Compact more Hoover students will go to SDSU

- ♦ SDSU college advisors working with Hoover counselors
- ♦ Individualized four-year student plans to meet requirements
- ♦ SAT/ACT test information and preparation
- ♦ Information on Financial aid
- ♦ Tutoring, mentoring and guidance in high school and at SDSU
- ♦ Collaboration between SDSU and Hoover faculty
- ♦ Internship opportunities
- ♦ And More!

This doesn't mean a few reminders about SAT/ACT test and application deadlines, or the same old speeches about going to college that have been made over and over. This means that not only will every incoming Hoover 9th grade student be guaranteed SDSU admission, but that they will have help at each grade level to reach the admission requirements, be ready for college, and then gain the skills they need to graduate with a degree.

The Hoover High Parent Center will also work with parents to help them plan for their children to go to college, understand financial aid options, research scholarships, and support their future college graduate. The Parent Center has already held its first parent visit to the SDSU campus, and plans for other events throughout the year.

In addition, Hoover's counseling department will work with SDSU college counselors and students to give presentations to all 9th grade classes starting in November. College Avenue Compact also will include many of the same activities as the Sweetwater Compact and share its SDSU partnerships and support sys-

tems. These programs already have been proven successful in the Sweetwater school district (SUHSD), and the results there are impressive: the number of SUHSD graduates who were admitted to and then enrolled in San Diego State University doubled between fall 2000 and fall 2006, and three times more of them were proficient in math and English when they applied. The Compact for Success also was named a 2007 Example of Excellence by the national education non-profit organization ¡Excelencia! In Education.

SDSU is just as committed to Hoover High and its own version of the compact.

"The College Avenue Compact is designed to help students in San Diego State's City Heights Educational Collaborative better prepare for higher education," said SDSU president Stephen Weber. "This initiative is just one more expression of SDSU's continuing commitment to the success of San Diego and its citizens."

The academic standards that each Hoover student must meet for guaranteed admission are:

- ♦ Attain a 3.0 GPA and maintain it through senior year
- ♦ Complete all CSU "A-G" course requirements (see sidebar)
- ♦ Satisfy the ELM (Entry Level Math Placement Test)
- ♦ Satisfy the EPT (Entry Level English Placement Test)
- ♦ Take the SAT or ACT test

Contact your Hoover counselor for more information.!



All Hoover 9th graders received information on college and the new program.

What Are A-G Requirements?

- A: US History, Government/World History -- 2 years.
- B: English -- 4 years (ELD 7-8 may apply).
- C: Math (Algebra, Geometry, Intermediate Algebra, Math Analysis, and Calculus) -- 3 years, 4 recommended.
- D: Laboratory Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics) -- 2 years, 3 recommended.
- E: Foreign Language (other than English) -- 2 years, 3 recommended.
- F: Visual and Performing Arts -- 1 year.
- G: College prep elective or additional year of any of the above -- 1 year.

On the Cover

Cardinal Pact, also known as zero period, is a program in JROTC that gives cadets the chance to practice for activities and competitions or to review things that they need work on. This year Cardinal Pact started September 18 and goes Monday through Friday from 6 am to 7 am. Yes it's early, but this just shows how motivated and driven the JROTC cadets are to achieve goals. It's a normal class and all school rules and regulations are enforced: two tardies equate to one absence and six absences constitute an F. Mondays and Fridays the cadets do physical training in which they exercise and practice for events such as cadet picnic events and Youth Physical Fitness. Tuesday is uniform inspection day. Wednesdays and Thursdays they have class in which they learn things such as leadership and survival techniques. Cardinal Pact also gives cadets the advantage to get ahead in knowledge and drill skills. For any information about signing up for JROTC Cardinal Pact, contact First Sergeant Gibbs or Sergeant First Class Coleman.

by Manuel Alva, 11th grade Hoover High JROTC

Clark Middle Opens New Social Work Center

Clark Middle School has outstanding teachers, experienced administrators and staff, and a wide variety of clubs and after-school programs. But it takes more than that for students to be successful. Just as important is for students to come to school every day ready to learn.

Unfortunately, there can be a lot going on at home, school, and in the community that distracts students from education and make it hard for families to give their children the support they need. As a result, attendance is often a serious problem, or when students are at school, they struggle to learn at their full potential because of other problems. But thanks to a new Social Work Center at Clark Middle School, help is now available any time something gets in the way of students focusing on school or parents taking care of their families.

The new Social Work Center, located in room 302 next to the Parent Center, is made possible by a partnership of Price Charities, San Diego City Schools, San Diego State University School of Social Work, SDSU Child and Family Development department, and the UCSD School of Medicine's Pediatricians and Community Collaborating Together (PACCT) program. Together, these partners provide one master's level social worker, a licensed clinical social worker, a Child Welfare Services Social Worker, a pediatric resident, and interns in social work, conflict resolution and peer mediation. Not only do they provide a level of service rarely found in a middle school, but it comes with little additional cost to the school.

"One of the amazing things about City Heights," noted center director Annie Lyles, "is that while there are many vulnerable children and families who live here, there is also an amazing variety of resources available to them. No matter what language, there is someone in the community who speaks it and can help. One of our jobs is to match these resources with people's problems, and then support them as they access the services they need."



Back row: Stephanie Griffin (L) and Mona Abood (R)
Front row: Annie Lyles (L) and Andrea Echavarria

In addition, the staff of the Social Work Center have a wide variety of skills and services right at Clark, and work directly with both student and family clients. Staff members speak English, Spanish and Arabic and have expertise in family violence, counseling, advocacy and securing financial assistance. Students can come in on their own or through a referral by administrators, counselors, or the nurse's office, and if a family is on campus, they can come in any time.

"Through the partners of the center and the support of the administrators here at Clark," Ms. Lyles explained, "we have been empowered to say, 'Yes, we can help'. We have the resources and flexibility to connect families with whatever they need."

The Social Work Center also benefits from close connections with the Parent Center at Clark Middle, as well as the parent centers at Rosa Parks Elementary and Hoover High and the on-site social workers at both schools.

"It's exceptional that we have access to such a wealth of social service agencies in City Heights," observed Ms. Lyles, "but on top of that, the social work and parent programs are linked together at the three schools of the City Heights Collaborative. We work as a team since many families have students at two or more of the schools, and we can continue help students and par-

ents as they move from Rosa Parks to Clark and then to Hoover. We are lucky to have such successful parent programs that have already made their schools a valuable community resource, and also the teachers and staff who are here because they want to make a difference."

While the Social Work Center is new, Ms. Lyles actually began working at Clark last February as the school's one on-site social worker. She therefore is familiar with many of the problems that students and parents have, and the special issues of middle school. Nonetheless, she admits that every day brings something new, a different need, and a different way to assist someone. Another thing that has changed is the number of people that the school is able to help with the addition of new social work staff. Between last February and the end of school in July, Ms. Lyles worked with 96 families. In just the first six weeks of school this year, the center already had 81 clients.

The expansion of the Social Work Center was coordinated by the Community Schools program of Price Charities, which also supports the parent centers, health clinics, and other programs at Rosa Parks, Clark and Hoover.

For more information on the staff and services at the Social Work Center, call (619) 563-6801, xt. 2221.

Rosa Parks Celebrates 10 years

Rosa Parks Elementary School marked its 10th anniversary in September, making this a good time to look back on those early years. What was it like that first year back in 1997? Ask any teacher who lived through it -- there are quite a few who have been at Rosa Parks from the beginning - and they will tell you that it was no picnic.

First, construction was not quite finished by the first day of school. The buildings were all there, but water, lights, and other things were still being worked on in many classrooms. At times there were almost as many landscapers, electricians, and plumbers at the school as teachers.

Next was the number of students who came on the first day. The school had been designed for about 800 students, but more than 1,100 showed up the first day, and more kept coming. Each week the enrollment grew larger, first 1,200 students, then 1,300, and the 400 building classrooms hadn't even been built yet.

"I remember that Emilee Watts, our principal, would go to the school district to hire more teachers almost every day," recalled teacher Patty Osbourne, "and we would even run out of lunches for students who ate later. In the kitchen they were making sandwiches and improvising so they could feed all the kids. The district didn't believe we needed lunch for over 1,300 students, so Emilee told them to come here and take a look for themselves."

Needless to say, Rosa Parks was very crowded. There were several classes in the multi-purpose room, two kinder classes in each room, and almost every upper grade had well over 30 students per teacher.

In addition, many of the students didn't know one another even though they lived in the same neighborhood. Before Rosa Parks opened, they had been bused to schools all over the city - anywhere that had room.

Thanks to administrators, teachers, parents, and partners, Rosa Parks Elementary is very different than on that first day. In fact, it keeps getting better and better!

Health Center Opened at Rosa Parks Elementary

Rosa Parks Elementary School opened the Health Center this fall, giving the school yet another way to support students, their families, and the community. The new space, formerly occupied by the Parent Center and teacher lounge, is a vast improvement over the cramped nurse's office in the administration building.

The Health Center was made possible through the support of Price Charities, SDSU's City Heights Educational Collaborative, and San Diego Unified School District. The Price Charities Community School Programs coordinate a wide variety of local and state resources to develop the schools of the City Heights Collaborative into valuable centers for the community. A Community School is a hub that is open to everyone, and provides not only academic instruction, but also health and social services, recreation, mentoring, and adult-oriented education. If a community resident of any age needs advice or information on education, after-school programs, housing, crime, computer training or job opportunities, their local school will help. Through this kind of support, families and neighborhoods become safe, healthy and successful, and support the academic achievement of their children and schools.

To reach these goals, the Rosa Parks Health Center provides services for both students and their families through two separate programs under the same roof: the school nurse's office for Rosa Parks students, and a Health Center to meet the medical needs of the children. The Health Center is supervised by a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner, Janice Baietto, and a School Nurse, Michele La Plant. Janice Baietto is certified to perform many of the functions of a physician such as examinations, medical physicals, medical diagnosis, prescribing medications, referrals to physicians and specialists, follow-up visits and other services that extend far beyond the duties typically associated with a school health office.

The new Health Center has a full-scale reception and waiting area, a student care room, a separate clinical area with two exam rooms, and staff offices. The Health Center operates two days a week as a health clinic where individuals, including those who do not have health insurance, can make appointments for medical visits through a partnership with the Mid City Community Clinic. Walk-in visits are also possible. For more information on the new Rosa Parks Health Center, call (619) 282-6803, ext. 4202.



The staff at the Rosa Parks Health Center provide medical care to students through the school nurse's office, and also to the community through its health clinic.

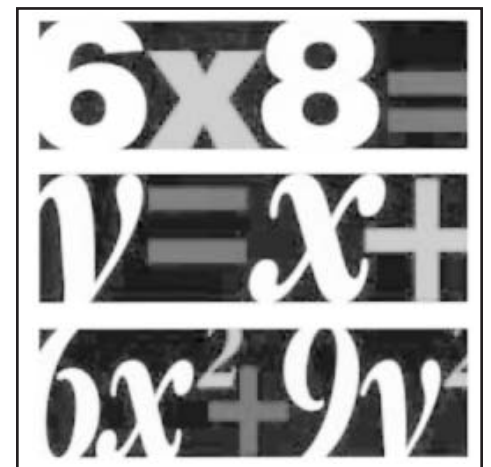
Advanced Math Classes Adding Up at Clark Middle

Clark Middle School started this school year with something new: four sections of pre-Algebra in 6th grade. In the past, there were only enough incoming 6th graders with advanced math skills for one or two classes, but this year a significantly greater number are ahead of the game in math proficiency.

By taking pre-Algebra in 6th grade, these students will be ready for Algebra in 7th, and then Geometry in 8th grade. Most students take Geometry in 9th or 10th grade, so Clark students will be taking a high school-level math class in middle school, and would even be on track to take college-level classes like Trigonometry or Calculus in high school.

"It's really exciting to see those kind of test scores from incoming 6th graders," said vice principal Kimberly Meng. "It means that more students are developing solid skills and background while in elementary school so that they are ready for the challenges in advanced math in middle school, high school and college."

In order to meet the A-G admission requirements for the California



State University system, students must pass at least three years of high school math classes, so Clark a growing number of Clark students will be on track for college.

"Having advanced math skills lets students explore careers like engineering, computer programming, physics, chemistry, and other math, science and technology fields," explained Mrs. Meng, who has a degree in Engineering from UCSD. "Even computer game design is based on using mathematical equations to create the movements of computer-generated animation."

... Time Machine ...



Hoover High's Homecoming was postponed until November 16 due to the wildfires. In the meantime, try to guess what year this Hoover Homecoming photo is from: 1968, 1974, 1979, 1982? Answer: 6 x 329

TEACHER TOPICS

Collaborative Partners Welcome Teachers to 2007-08 School Year

On August 31, over 300 teachers, counselors, librarians, nurses, administrators, and support staff from Hoover High, Monroe Clark Middle and Rosa Parks Elementary Schools filled the Monroe Clark auditorium and were warmly greeted by Collaborative leadership representatives.

The annual Fall Orientation Meeting was opened by Executive Director Tim Allen who introduced Dr. Stephen Weber, President of San Diego State University. Weber announced that the long awaited College Avenue Compact, a guaranteed admission program for Hoover High graduates, had been formally accepted by SDSU and would begin implementation with the Class of 2011. Dr. Ethan Singer, SDSU Vice President of Academic Affairs, followed with a reflection on Spring 2007 CST data and challenged teachers to set high expectations for all students with the goal of moving 50% of Collaborative students into the proficient and advanced performance bands.

Other featured speakers included the new Dean of the College of Education, Dr. Ric Hovda, and San Diego Unified Board of Education members, Shelia Jackson and



SDSU president Stephen Weber affirmed the university's longstanding commitment to the City Heights Educational Collaborative

Katherine Nakamura, Deputy Superintendent Geno Flores reaffirmed the school district's support for Collaborative goals, and Price Charities was represented by the Director of Educational Outreach, Dr. Rene Townsend, and Director of Community Schools, Dr. Dorothy Zirkle. San Diego Educators' Association President, Camille Zombro, praised the hard work and commitment of Collaborative teach-

ers and introduced director Dick Gale and Elsie Norgard.

The audience included many San Diego State professors and administrators including Drs. Nancy Farnan, Leif Fearn, Carla Mathieson, Barbara Moss, Dan Finnegan, Gerald Moss, and Joe Johnson. Dr. Rich Cansdale, Area Superintendent, and Nellie Meyer, Assistant Superintendent for High Schools, were also present to support their schools.

At the conclusion, Tim Allen provided staff members with additional details of the soon to be implemented College Avenue Compact, and introduced Lou Murillo and Jose Preciado from SDSU who will provide assistance with implementation. Allen followed by presenting principals Chuck Podhorsky (Hoover), Barbra Balsler (Monroe Clark), and Peggy Crane (Rosa Parks) with colorful College Avenue Compact banners to display at their respective schools. Following the meeting, partners and teachers enjoyed refreshments on the courtyard and shared plans for the upcoming school year.



Shelia Jackson of the San Diego Unified Board of Education

Padres President is Clark Middle's Principal for a Day

Dick Freeman, President and CEO of the San Diego Padres, recently spent a day at Monroe Clark Middle School through the Principal for a Day program. The goals of the program are to immerse business leaders in the public school environment, increase awareness of educational issues, provide a platform for lasting partnerships, and enhance awareness of workplace skills that are necessary for students to succeed. Mr. Freeman also gave students an incentive to get to school on time every day: any Clark student with

perfect attendance from October 19 through June 30 will will two tickets to a Padres home game in August



Tired of flimsy, factory-made furniture? Need a place for your kids to picnic? Hoover High's ROP Cabinet Making class is raising money for materials by selling hand-made, solid-wood children's picnic tables in two sizes that are perfect for the patio or back yard. They're unfinished, so you can get the kids involved in their own home improvement project. Cost: \$50. Contact Hoover teacher Arturo Gonzalez for more details at (619) 283-6281, xt 4601.

New Initiatives for the City Heights Collaborative

By Tim Allen, Ph.D.

Executive Director, SDSU City Heights Educational Collaborative

Over the last 6 months I have had an opportunity to learn more about the City Heights Educational Collaborative, its schools, and its partners -- and to see the differences between the Collaborative schools and other schools in the district. The Collaborative has continued over the years to stay focused on the original goals which are to:

1. Significantly improve student achievement.
2. Prepare educators and other professionals to effectively serve inner-city environments.
3. Provide solutions to community problems through an active research agenda.

In the last issue of the Collaborative's newspaper I wrote about some of the things we are doing for each of these goal areas.

I have also learned that there is far more to the Collaborative and that significant resources and efforts are being directed to the areas of safety/facilities, curriculum, teaching, leadership, and school-family-neighborhood connections. Here are just some of the initiatives currently in process:

1. Safe and Adequate School Facilities

- ◆ We have just received approval of additional funding for physical plan improvements at Hoover. Working with Lynn Susholtz, the environmental artist who designed the entry at Monroe Clark, and with SDSU's Dr. Cynthia Uline, who is also Director of the 21st Century Schoolhouse which focuses on the effects of facilities and learning, Hoover will receive the beginning phases of some much needed changes. News about a school-level advisory committee for this work should be forthcoming soon.

2. Rigorous Academic Curriculum

- ◆ The Collaborative has funded a Marilyn Burns consultant who is working with Monroe Clark math teachers as well as 5th grade teachers from Rosa Parks and several teachers from Wilson, the other major feeder to Hoover.
- ◆ Staff from SDSU's Undergraduate Studies are working directly each week with the 9th grade English

teachers to begin the process of curricular and instructional alignment to improve the transition from high school to college/university.

3. Quality Teaching

- ◆ The new Dean of the College of Education, Dr. Ric Hovda, is working with the Collaborative to re-examine our commitment to serving as Professional Development Schools through the use of comprehensive national standards. You will have opportunities to shape how this work unfolds.

4. Shared Leadership

- ◆ We have established ongoing Collaborative meetings for our K-16 counselors and are using the American School Counselor Association's national standards as a guide for the work.
- ◆ The Collaborative is in the process of scheduling the second K-16 Governance Advisory Committee

to create a K-16 forum for discussion and deliberation about Collaborative-wide activities and projects.

- ◆ The SDEA UniServ Field Organizer, Elsie Norgard, and the school representatives have met with me and will continue to do so on a monthly basis.

5. Family-Neighborhood-School Connections

- ◆ In addition to the new Parent Academic Liaison position at Rosa Parks, we are working to fund a part time position at Monroe Clark that will serve as a link between the academic programs and parents -- thereby adding to the already comprehensive parent services at Clark.

There are other areas to describe that I will save for future issues. Working together as the City Heights Educational Collaborative, we have and will continue to make significant improvements in the lives of our students and their families.

A Special Visitor

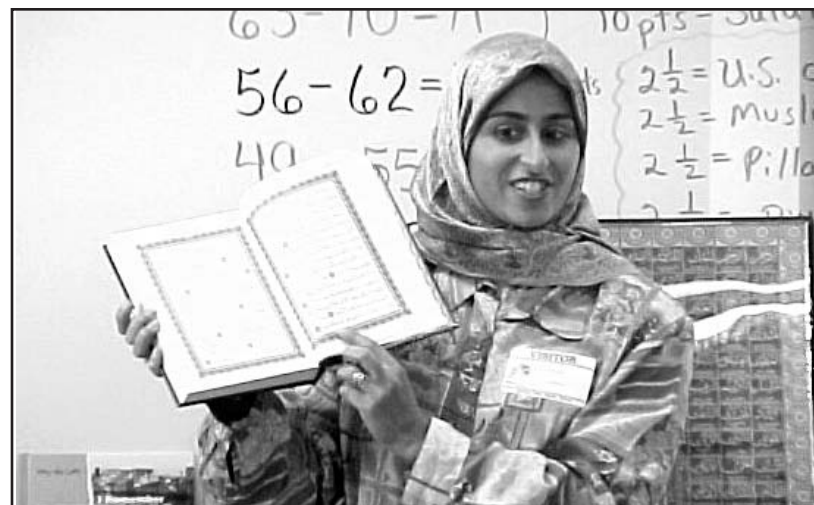
Mr. Roundtree's Students Learn about Islam from a Guest Speaker

By Richard Alvarez, Nallely Hernandez, Jonathan Partida, Diem Tran and Lisa Tran
Monroe Clark Middle School

Sometimes you need more than just a textbook. Seventh grade teacher Mr. Roundtree figured this out early on when he taught his students the unit on Islam. After lecturing about Islam from the textbook, he decided to bring in a more direct source of information, who also happens to be a good friend of his, Mrs. Lazzouni.

Mrs. Lazzouni was willing to come to Mr. Roundtree's class to further inform the students about her religion -- Islam. She showed the class slides on Islam and even brought in some of her personal belongings. These included some clothing, a Qur'an (the holy book of Islam) and a plaque featuring some decorative writing, or calligraphy.

Mrs. Lazzouni presented her lesson in a way that students admired. "Mrs. Lazzouni was very patient, nice, and



Mrs. Lazzouni shows students a beautifully decorated Qur'an

was willing to answer our questions, even if the answer was obvious," said Lisa Tran, one of the students who attended the lesson.

Having a guest in class showed that

you can learn more from experience than from a book. Based on a quick poll of Mr. Roundtree's class, most of the students apparently enjoyed Mrs. Lazzouni's presentation. Many learned

something new or clarified some foggy ideas from earlier parts of the Islam unit.

Mrs. Lazzouni was definitely a great help (especially with a test a few days later!). I hope that other students in the near future get to learn from her, too. The students have already sent her thank you letters, but we can't seem to thank her enough. Thank you, Mrs. Lazzouni! And remember, there's more than one way to learn!

The Five Pillars of Islam are the main beliefs of the religion. They are:

shahadah, the Muslim declaration of faith;

salat, the prayers that are done five times each day;

zakat, the alms or charity that is given to the poor;

sawm, fasting during the month of Ramadan;

and **hajj**, the pilgrimage to Mecca.

CURRICULUM CURRENTS

Hoover Teacher and Tech Academy Receive Recognition

Hoover High School's Academy of Information Technology (AOIT) and its director, Ellen Towers, had a pretty good October. They brought home two awards, one from Technology & Learning and the other from the Technology Training Foundation of America (TTFA).

Technology & Learning is a national organization that supports technology educators through online resources, T&L magazine, and conferences for technology directors, district administrators, principals,

and teachers. They selected Ellen Towers as one of four national finalists from among hundreds of nominees for the T&L 2007 Leader of the Year Program.

AOIT also received a 2007 Technology Heroes award from the Technology Training Foundation of America in recognition of educators who make a difference in preparing youth for the challenges of our technological world. Better yet, the award comes with 10 Pentium computers for Hoover High.

"AOIT started in 2004 with just 35 students, four teachers and one classroom," noted Mrs. Towers. "Our goal was to build a closer feeling of community for students and provide them with workplace skills and outside experiences that would guide their future through the use of technology. Today we have 8 state of the art classrooms, 11 teachers, and 300 students, with about 80% of them going on to college."



Hoover Moves Back to Former Kinder Annex

With the return of the Rosa Parks Elementary Kindergarten to their regular campus, Hoover High regained some space this fall. The former Kinder Annex, which was at Hoover for 8 years to relieve overcrowding at Rosa Parks, is now the home of Hoover's AVID, and Foundations for Success programs, AP and 12th grade English, and the Hoover Parent Center.

Having more space is always a good thing, especially at Hoover with its enrollment of more than 2,100 students. At the same time, the classrooms are farther away from the center of the campus.

"It is a little remote," admitted AVID teacher Ted Hernandez, "but I like the idea of having all AVID students together and our own space for AVID events. I also think it's good to have seniors and Foundation students sharing the same area."

For other teachers, the move to the Annex hasn't made much difference.

"Before moving I had a bungalow exactly like this one, just on the other side of the campus," explained teacher Richard Norton. "One difference is that my old classroom was right next to the side gate and there was much more traffic -- both students and the delivery trucks going in and out. So my new classroom is much quieter, and I otherwise haven't heard anything negative from students about the location."

In any case, Hoover has regained part of its campus. But what was it before the Kinder Annex? First it was a

parking lot, which made installing the portable classrooms much easier. Before that, part of it was an athletic field for girls' sports, and part was multipurpose courts for basketball, volleyball or other activities. Going back even further, some of the space wasn't part of Hoover at all, but was private property with several houses on it. And according to vice principal Andy Trakas, Hoover's unofficial historian, there was even a swimming pool there at one time.

Future plans for the space include removing the Kinder playground and installing benches so students will have a place to sit or even have class outside sometimes, although the transformation may take some time.

"We're trying to find a place for the playground equipment," explained vice principal Loni Soderberg. "It would be nice to move it to a school or park where kids could still use it."



Hoover High in the 1960s. The area marked by dotted lines became the Kinder Annex in 1998, but back then it was occupied by several houses. The school district purchased the property, and many others at the edges of the school, for expansion.

A New Academy at Hoover High School

By Meghan Voeltner, Foundations for Success

As the 2007-2008 school year begins, you may notice some big changes at Hoover High School. The Rosa Parks Kindergarten Annex has been returned to Hoover, and a new academy has found a home there. Foundations For Success (FFS) is a new 9th grade academy offered for students at Hoover. The FFS Program was instituted last year in the gated area of the A bungalows. Over the summer, many dedicated teachers and Principal



Students receive extra help from tutors

Dr. Chuck Podhorsky spent countless hours redesigning the format and curriculum for this amazing project. FFS is an academy designed for 9th grade students who need support in English and math. During their 8th grade year, students were recommended to become a member of this academy based on their grades in academic courses. This year the FFS Academy is focusing on filling in the educational gaps and reconnecting our students with their school and community.

Four teachers have committed to teaching in the FFS Academy. Leslie Hardiman is the English 1-2 teacher. Jimmy Morgans is the Algebra instructor, while Aida Ortiz teaches the CAHSEE Algebra Support course. Meghan Voeltner is the director of the academy and teaches the CAHSEE English Support class. Teachers are also collaborating with special education and SDSU assistants who work with FFS students on a daily basis. Each student is required to take four courses during the school day. As an academy student, English 1-2, Algebra, and CAHSEE Support are required courses. Each student then takes PE or an elective of



Teacher Meghan Voeltner with Foundations for Success students

their choosing. In this model, students have the luxury of working with a small core group of instructors, as well as the opportunity to experiment with the variety of elective courses Hoover has to offer.

While course work and academics are at the forefront of the FFS Academy mission, we also are emphasizing collaborative team work, self-esteem, and life skills as part of our curriculum. We are in the process of planning several exciting field trips for the academy students. We are also working closely with Hoover's Parent Center to have guest speakers come in and talk to our students about the choices they are making and where those choices may or may not take them.

Every teacher in Hoover's FFS

Academy has an open-door policy. We would like to extend an invitation to parents, guardians, and community members to come by and visit our classrooms. We would love to share what is going on in and outside of the classroom and highlight our outstanding students.

The 2007-2008 school year has started off with a bang! We expect that we will continue to rise to our challenges and exceed in all areas of academic life. Foundations For Success is the newest academy at Hoover. It may be the smallest in number, but certainly it is growing by leaps and bounds in creativity and learning. Our students have been extremely successful and a joy to work with. We look forward to a dynamic and unforgettable year!

Rosa Parks Elementary Makes Room for Music

After many years of hauling instruments and materials from one place to another, Rosa Parks Elementary teacher Annette Kover finally has a music room. Her work with students in Kindergarten, first and second grade is now much easier and more comfortable and productive, especially since she no longer has to shuttle back and forth between the Hoover Kinder Annex and the Rosa Parks campus. On top of that, the new room, which she shares with the school's instrumental music program, came with \$5000 for new students instruments.

"Students will be coming to the music room for three years in a row," explained Ms. Kover, "and having the new room and instruments will help me get them interested in music so that they will want to be in the choir or music programs in 4th grade and 5th grade."

With 70 students already in the choir, Ms. Kover may soon outgrow the multipurpose room as well!



Music teacher Annette Kover sings with students in the new music room

Hoover's Visual and Performing Arts Off to Awesome Start

Hoover High School's Visual & Performing Arts Academy (VAPA) is new and improved this year and off to a dynamic and exciting start. In addition to 200 students, the program also has a new director of music, Cameron Brown, a new orchestra and choir teacher, Laura Williams, and new drama director, Elizabeth Flesh.

With this new energy and support, VAPA successfully completed three events in the first month of school! We had an amazing assembly in September to introduce our staff to our VAPA students. A famous San Diego poet gave a reading, and a spokesperson from the district VAPA office spoke about the success of students involved in the arts. It was a great beginning.

The following week, we hosted a dessert reception for parents after open house and passed out t-shirts and stickers with the cool new VAPA logo. The very next week we hosted an art event at the City Heights Weingart Library to showcase student artwork, poetry, monologues and songs. Laura Williams played the piano which created the finishing touch to a truly cultured art event.

These events were followed by a Day of the Dead art celebration at the City Heights Collaborative offices



An eerie Day of the Dead altar showcased ceramics

three blocks west of Hoover High on El Cajon Blvd. The event showcased masks made by students in ceramics, art, English and drama, a wide variety of paintings, poetry readings, and Day of the Dead altars. Student docents were also on hand to describe each exhibit.

Needless to say, we are exhausted, yet truly excited at the overwhelming capabilities of our students!

VAPA's MISSION:

- Academic excellence in ALL subjects.
- Small learning community environment.
- Teachers who are practicing artists.
- Students dedicated to improving their craft.
- Opportunities to share the visual and performing arts with Hoover High School and the community of City Heights.



Top: VAPA students on parade to their Day of the Dead show
Above: A student docent explains a Day of the Dead altar to Tim Allen

VAPA: Who's New and What Did They Do?



Cameron Brown, Music Department

Mr. Brown was offered a record contract while in a garage band in high school! He was awarded the Instrumental Magazine Louis Armstrong Jazz Award twice while playing trumpet in high school jazz band.

He professionally arranged marching and pep band music for local high schools and San Diego State University, four of which are still in regular playing circulation at SDSU.

Mr. Brown graduated from SDSU with a degree in music education.

He coached brass and/or drum line at 10 schools while attending SDSU!



Elizabeth Flesh, Drama Department

Ms. Flesh played *Soul* in *Hydriotaphia*; *Emily* in *Our Town*, *Hot Box Girl* in *Guys & Dolls*, *Viola* in *Twelfth Night*, *Agnes* in *School for Wives*, *Mom* in *True West*, *Vicky* in *Dogs Barking*, *Cynthia* in *Maiden's Prayer*, *Sophie* in *Spin the Bottle*, *Claire* in *A Slight Accident*, and *Alma Hix* in *Music Man*.

She also has television and film credits too, like *The Last Year*, *Black Widow*, *Oregon Public Broadcast*, *America Online*, *Ned & Stacy*, and *Weird Science*.

Ms. Flesh has studied at University of Oregon, New York University, with Cathleen Wilder for voice and vocal training, the California Ballet Company, and Gregory Watkins Studio. She has her degree in Theatre Arts with a minor in English Lit.



Laura Williams, Music Department

Ms. Williams taught music classes at La Jolla Elementary.

She implemented and expanded the youth theatre program at Selma Recreation Department, directing and producing 14 plays/musicals, five junior company pre-shows and two workshops.

She was the Choral Assistant and accompanist for Clovis West High School.

She has been church pianist for two churches.

VAPA Student Showcase



Where I am From

By Tesfom Mesfun

Because I am of dark skin,
And speak three languages,
People wonder where I am from.

Where I am from,

There is hunger, civil war
And poor homeless people
All over the city streets.

Where I am from

There are not enough doctors
Or medical supplies
Health problems are a concern

AIDS is a big problem

Where I am from

Schools have outdoor class
And families that only have
Enough money to send one child to
school

Will often send a boy rather than a girl.

Where I am from

Standing in the hot arid village,
Everywhere you look, you see miles
Of dune and sky in every direction.

Where I am from

Is full of wildlife
Lions threaten our livestock
Vultures circle the sky

Baboons play in the parks.

I am proud of where I come from.



Where I'm From

By Reginald Madison

Where I'm from where concrete sur-
rounds the mind

While forest and trees sing in harmony a
distance away

Where I'm from is a place where the vio-
lence continues to flow

A place were crack was the way of the
streets

Where I'm from is a place where educa-
tion was the only way out

Little kids bein' exposed to the negative
real world

Where I'm from I'm just happy to see the
morning sun

Sex, money, and gangs is what makes
the hood active

Where I'm from is a place where whatev-
er you wish for is what you get

People pass away without a doubt

Where I'm from a smile means the begin-
ning of good times

Endless tears run through my broken
soul day and night

Where I'm from used to be no mercy
We roam the streets in search of our
future

Where I'm from is where a street of hard
knocks knocks at your door Hoping
and wishin the light of opportunity will
emerge

Where I'm from is where people split up
Waiting only years later to get back
together as one lays in a coffin Where
I'm from seems a hard way of life

People find motivations to stay alive
Where I'm from is a place that was once
called "hell"

Opening a closet only to find the corpse
of a depressed body Where I'm from
was once a neighborhood I feared
everyday

As thugs continue the actions of the 187
Where I'm from can only be a nightmare
that I wish to wake up from Paradise
is only a few miles away

Where I'm from going to sleep was my
only happy place

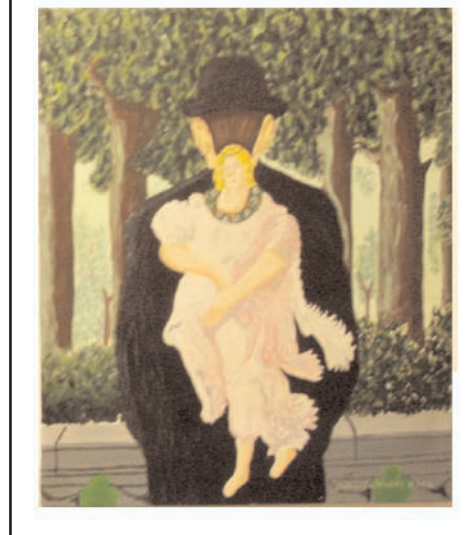
Sharp edges of knives pierces through
the pregnant woman Where I'm from
it'z just another sad ending to a life

The streets are filled with talent
Where I'm from the prestigious people
don't care

I want the near perfect life
Where I'm from California is my front yard
Life is too short

Love me while I'm here

Because where I'm from the sun doesn't
shine forever



Untitled

(an excerpt)

By Ricardo Moreno

Another day comes to an end.
I can now close my eyes and pretend,
My portal to the world where I belong,
Where I feel I can't go wrong.
Headphones, black drapes and a
locked door,

My home that once was before.
Pencil in hand, nothing to gain,
It takes away all that sweet pain.
I cry on paper with my lead,
All those times I wish I were dead.
The world and images that flow,
My art and poetry as you know.
I lay awake through the night,
I feel alone, no warmth or light.

But my reason for living appears,
Drying all my useless tears,
The woman I love and adore,
After her, I need no more.
She mends me with her word,
I know it seems quite absurd.
I live for her and her alone.
I'll continue until my life is thrown.

PEOPLE UP CLOSE

Close-Up of Hoover High's New Principal

Hoover High School welcomed Chuck Podhorsky as its new principal this fall. But Dr. Podhorsky isn't really new to Hoover at all. For the last two years he served as vice principal, and has worked with teachers and students at Hoover, Clark Middle and Rosa Parks Elementary since 2001.

Dr. Podhorsky also isn't new to leadership either – that goes back to his days as one of the youngest Eagle Scouts in San Diego; and his interest in teaching goes back to college or earlier.

"In college I started in science, worked in a biotech lab while a student at UCSD, and at one point wanted to be a marine biologist," he recalled, "but the job as Shamu's trainer was already taken, so I started to think about other options. By my junior year I had firmly decided on teaching as a career. I had always loved teaching and working with children. Most importantly, I really wanted to help make positive changes in my community and the world around me."

After graduating, Dr. Podhorsky went to CSU San Marcos to get his teaching credential, and started off as a student teacher in Escondido.

"I came back to school after winter break," he remembered, "and all



Dr. Podhorsky, age 8



Principal Chuck Podhorsky with some Hoover students

the kids in my first semester class ran up to greet me. That's when I really knew that teaching made a difference."

Then it was on to Memorial Jr. High in Logan Heights, where Dr. Podhorsky, who still was just Mr. Podhorsky then, taught math, science and literacy to 8th graders.

"At Memorial I would make home visits a couple times a week, and I always felt welcome and appreciated," he noted. "At the same time, it really helped me understand what my students' lives were like. It opened my eyes to their experiences and I was able to make closer connections them."

These insights, along with his enthusiasm and determination, helped Dr. Podhorsky become a better teacher and eventually led to a job helping new teachers at Rosa Parks, Clark and Hoover do the same through the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment program.

"One problem that many new teachers face is a feeling of isolation," he explained. "They are at a school where they often don't know anyone, in a neighborhood that they are unfamiliar with, or teaching a subject or age that they've never

taught before. It's critical that we support new teachers during these first years. They are changing the lives of students and deserve all the support and encouragement we can offer."

The same question of how to help teachers connect themselves and their students to school is now part of the mission that Dr. Podhorsky has taken on at Hoover High.

"I want Hoover to be the cornerstone of this community," he shared. "The center of life for students, teachers, families, and the neighborhood -- a place everyone is proud of, a place where students and parents can go to learn, get help with a problem, see a play or concert, or cheer on a Cardinal sports team together."

To make this happen, Dr. Podhorsky envisions that Hoover will provide every student with opportunities to be successful at whatever they want to do. He also wants to create an environment that is safe, clean, beautiful, and deserving of school pride. In each classroom he believes expectations must be high, and that each student who starts

Hoover in 9th grade should be there in a cap and gown four years later.

"When I was a student at Madison High, I felt connected to the school and was involved in track, wrestling, baseball, band and all sorts of activities. I balanced learning and having fun, but for some kids here those connections aren't being made," he observed. "It's a problem that we all have to work on every day and every year, but I know that Hoover can do it. We will need to work together to change the expectations, change the culture of the school," Dr. Podhorsky stated. "We need to dream bigger, always be creative, open the doors to our true potential, and make other people share those big dreams. If you truly like and want to serve people, you will make it come true."



Top: The 1980s - notice the mustache AND mullet
Above: This Halloween with the next generation of Podhorskys

Clark Middle School Welcomes New Vice Principals



Monroe Clark vice principal Geof Martin comes from a family of teachers. His father, uncle, and father-in-law all were teachers. But becoming a teacher wasn't his plan at first. Instead he worked his way up from a delivery driver to a production manager at a Pullman Laundry and Linen. But through his love of the outdoors he became interested in science and how to help young people understand the environment and preserve our world for future generations.

So he went back to school at 24 years old, first at Mesa College, then SDSU where he earned a Bachelor's degree in Biology with a minor in Chemistry. After student teaching at Pershing Middle, he taught science there for ten years, joined the district's science leadership team, participated in the Educational Leadership Development Academy at the University of San Diego, and served as VP at Keiller Middle School.

These many years of experience have given him a good understanding of students and the interaction of standards, curriculum, instruction and assessment.

"It's all about the learning and getting better at what we do," Mr. Martin explained. "Science at Monroe Clark has had good positive gains in student achievement, so my job is figuring out how to support those teachers and then continue to move forward."



Bo and Luke Duke? No, that's Geof's brother Greg on the left, Geof in the middle, and their grandfather on the right.

But even though Mr. Martin has spent a long time working at middle schools, he still remembers what it was like as a middle school student himself at Bonita Vista.

"What I remember about middle school is that you feel as if you are different and no one understands. Feelings like insecurities, doubts, confusion, strong emotions of all kinds" he recalled. "It's not an easy time, but at some point I realized that I wasn't alone, I was not different. It helped me to know that everyone was going through the same thing that I was, everyone is trying to figure it out."

While Mr. Martin has shared some of the same experiences as students at Clark, he also has had some very unique ones through his many years of camping and hiking.

"One hike that stands out," he recalled, "was a trip to Tuolumne Meadow in Yosemite with my wife. When we arrived at the camp site, we saw that there was a bear wire - that's a cable stretched between two poles where you hang your food so the bears can't reach it. Some other backpackers already were there so we decided to camp further away. I hung our food on a tree branch about 15 feet from our tent, and when we woke up in the morning, it was gone! We followed the trail that the bear left when it dragged off our whole bag of food, but all that we found was some bubble gum and a tea bag. The food that was supposed to last us a whole week didn't even make it one day."

Mr. Martin also spent a year in Alaska, drove to Cabo and back, and had many other adventures both near and far. There's probably a story that goes with each, so ask him to tell you one sometime.

What makes Monroe Clark Middle School's Kimberly Meng different from most vice principals? For one thing, she competes in triathalons, not just to stay in shape, but also to raise money the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

"I have a friend who was diagnosed with lymphoma, and through triathalons I can help support cancer treatment, research, the individuals who suffer from these diseases and their families," she explained. "My favorite part of triathalons is the swimming, and I often can come out of the water pretty close to the front. The hardest for me is the running, and the biking I just try to get through as best I can."

Another interesting thing about Mrs. Meng is that she has a degree in Structural Engineering from UCSD, and that she once dreamed of being a pilot or astronaut.

"I really enjoyed math, and my favorite class in junior high was industrial arts," she recalled, "so Engineering seemed like a good major. It involved classes in Physics and thinking about math in a different dimension through composite or imaginary numbers, and equations that explain things like friction and vibration."

No all of her time was spent on theoretical problems, however. One project involved designing and building a real crane that could lift over 1000 pounds.

"The project involved very specific parameters," she remembered. "Under a load of 1000 pounds, the boom of the crane could not bend more than .25 inches, but at 1500 pounds it had to fail. We began the design on a computer and then built a real crane out of steel. It was about 12 feet tall."

Although these kinds of projects were interesting, Mrs. Meng began to feel that engineering involved too much time solving computer-simulated problems, and not enough on solving the problems of real people.

"About two years into my degree," she explained, "I realized that as an engineer I'd probably spend a lot of time sitting by myself in a cubicle, and I wanted to work with people instead. Designing and building a bridge does help people, but not in the same way a teacher does."



Mrs. Meng nevertheless finished her engineering degree and went on to National University to get her teaching credential. Her first job was at Mira Mesa High teaching basic math, algebra, and geometry. She then taught math at Correira Junior High, Mission Bay High, and Taft Middle School where she participated in the Math Administrator program and also earned an administrative credential from the University of San Diego before becoming VP at Taft in 2005. Rather than building bridges or cranes, today Mrs. Meng is helping build an even more successful math curriculum at Clark Middle School.



Mrs. Meng and her family, husband James, daughter Chloe, age 7, and son Xander, age 3.

Clark Counselor Collects Classic Cars



Students and staff at Clark Middle School recently may have noticed an unusual car in the parking lot. After all, it's not every day that you see an automobile that looks like it came from a museum. So what is it? Whose is it? How fast can it go? Read on for the answers.

The car is a 1940 Buick Special that has been restored to original condition by Clark counselor Sergio Hernandez. Only about 12,000 were made, and with the rare full-option package of fog lights, radio, defroster, heater (located under the front seat) and more, this automobile originally sold for \$996. Its straight-8 motor produces about 125 horsepower, enough

to eventually get the nearly 4000-pound car up to about 100 miles per hour – fast for a car in the 1940s.

Mr. Hernandez bought the car in 1993 and began restoring it in 2001, finishing this summer just in time for his daughter's wedding. He had already restored a 1936 Chevrolet and a 1949 Mercury.

"I've been fascinated with automobiles from the 1930s and '40s since I was a kid," he recalled, "and my brother got me interested in restoring them. Once you start a project like this, it's hard to stop, but it also takes a lot of patience and perseverance. I almost completely disassembled the Buick down to the frame, and replaced or

restored hundreds of original parts."

Mr. Hernandez's search for parts meant finding specialists all over the country, and he even drove eight hours to Sacramento just to buy one button for the radio, which not many cars had back in 1940.

"The push-buttons on the radio spell out the word B-U-I-C-K," he explained, "and I was only missing the C. I didn't want to buy a whole radio, just the one letter."

Another interesting feature of the car is its THREE spare tires, two along the sides and another in the trunk.

"Roads back then weren't like the ones we have today," he observed, "so more spares might be needed to make sure you'd get to where you were going."

As for driving the car, Mr. Hernandez says that it rides very smooth and is comfortable to drive, although it has no power steering and is closer in size to a truck than a car.

"It's not quick compared to a 2007 car, but it easily goes 65 on the highway, or even faster, which I did at my daughter's wedding because we were running late," he admitted.

Mr. Hernandez has already started on his next project, another 1936 Chevrolet.

"Maybe it's like an addiction for me, but a good one," he noted, "and I encourage students to get into restoring older cars for a hobby. It's something you can do with your father or another family member, there are lots of classic older cars around, and you get to own a part of history."



Mr. Hernandez worked on the Buick Special for many years, but finished just in time for his daughter's wedding.

Best Friends Highlights

Community Service:

Anyone who lived through the week of the firestorms here in San Diego would describe the impact it had on their lives as memorable. For several of our Best Friends, volunteering and remembering the community members who served with them became the number one activity during the week off from school. Best Friends girls volunteered at the Salvation Army Kroc Center several days to unload donation trucks, sort goods, food and clothing items. They also repacked these items into boxes for pallets to be distributed to evacuation centers throughout the city. The girls joined together with many other wonderful volunteers throughout the city and learned the value of teamwork and importance of community service - everyone has something to give!

National Youth Summit

During the summer, 8 more Diamond Girls went to Washington DC for the annual Youth Summit. More than 500 young adults from around the nation gather together for three days of a remarkable, informative full day program of panel discussions, workshops and the Summit's signature musical production in which all students attending the Summit participated. Workshop topics included College Prep, Loans and Scholarships, Friendship and Dating, Personal Finances, Community Issues, Peer Support. The discussions brought out some very common challenges facing our young people today - youth need more healthy extra curricular activities, community service projects, academic support and mentoring. The call for this year was: Today's Leaders - Tomorrow's Future!

Annual Kick Off

Best Friends Annual Kick Off will be at San Diego State University in the Aztec Center on Wednesday, November 14, 2007. Bowling, pizza and fun for all Best Friends and their mentors translates into a great evening

of energy and laughter for over 120 Best Friends from Rosa Parks, Monroe Clark and Hoover. This year we will be celebrating our first Best Friends/Diamond Girls graduating class! Go seniors!



Diamond Girls help with fire relief at the Kroc Center

parent PAGES

Hoover Parent Center Gets New Offices



Hoover High's Parent Center began this year with a new location and new staff members. With help from Price Charities and the SDSU City Heights Collaborative, the Parent Center was able to move out of its original location in some of the Hoover's oldest bungalows and into a new space in the former

Kinder Annex.

A ribbon cutting ceremony to open the new center was held during Hoover's open house in October. The new office space and experienced staff will help Hoover's Parent Center provide even better support to the families of Hoover students and the City Heights community.



Greg Cox - Director

Greg Cox has a B.S. in Organizational Management from Wilberforce University and an M.S. in General Administration from

Central Michigan University. He has lived in San Diego since 2003 and worked with the Upward Bound college preparation program for 7 years. Before joining Hoover's Parent Center, Greg worked at UCSD as a program counselor. He encourages all Hoover parents to become involved in parent committees and leadership opportunities such as the English Learner Advisory Committee, Governance, and School Site Committee.

Oscar Navarro - Social Worker

Oscar Navarro is the Social Worker at the Parent Center. He graduated from SDSU with a degree in Psychology and has experience in health, social services and community research. In conjunction with the vertical teams of Social Workers at Rosa Parks Elementary and Monroe Clark Middle, he helps students and families with the transition to Hoover, focusing on their wellbeing and academic success. He also provides support for families by connecting them with different resources in the school and community, case management, referrals and parenting classes.



Felicia El-Aton - Parent Coordinator

Hoover's Parent Center Coordinator has lived in San Diego for three years. She and her daughter moved here from Chicago, IL in 2004. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications from Columbia College, and years of experience in academics and working with children. She is an active volunteer at Rosa Parks Elementary, where her daughter attends school. As the new Parent Coordinator at Hoover she plans to bring her enthusiasm and experience to strengthen Hoover student's academic careers and to support and assist parents with giving their children the knowledge and tools to succeed in life.



Rosa Parks Parent Center Expands

The Rosa Parks Elementary Parent Center has grown a lot since the school opened, and now has a room big enough for its many program and services. Thanks to the new location in rooms 109 and 112, parents, staff, students and community members are no longer squeezed like sardines. There is room for meetings, events and classes, a kids play area, tables where volunteers can work, computer stations, and even a kitchen area.

"It's much nicer," commented parent coordinator Irma Barraza. "The walls are painted a warm and welcoming color, we have room for our desks, storage space, a place to have lunch, and a divider so we can split the room into two separate areas if we need to."

Everyone is invited to see the new location, or to find out about the many programs, workshops, classes and school leadership opportunities of the Rosa Parks Parent Center, call (619) 282-6803.



Above: Parent groups like ELAC now have room to meet
Below: Parent volunteers now have space to work on classroom projects



Mark Your Calendars!

November 15	Coffee with the Principal at Clark Middle, 6:00 PM
November 19-23	Thanksgiving Break
November 28	Eager Reader/Good Citizen Awards, Rosa Parks Elementary, 8:00 AM
November 30	Dads' Club Meeting, Rosa Parks Elementary, 6:00 PM
December 7	Hoover Parent Tour of City College
December 11	Dads' Club Meeting, Clark Middle, 6:00 PM
December 14	Coffee with the Principal, Clark Middle School, 8:30 AM
December 14-15	Hoover Drama Performance
December 18	Rosa Parks Holiday Concert
December 20	Dads' Club Meeting, Rosa Parks Elementary, 6:00 PM

Hoover Winter Break: December 24 - January 8
Parks and Clark Winter Break: December 24 - January 22
Intersession: January 8 - January 18

Clark Middle School Hosts Coffee with the Principal

Parents of Clark Middle School students are invited to attend the monthly Coffee with the Principal program. The purpose of the meetings, usually held in the morning, is for parents to get to know principal Barbra Balser and have opportunities to ask questions and express concerns. With help from Parent Center volunteers, breakfast is provided for morning meetings, and translation into Spanish is also available through the school's new wireless headset translation equipment. Each meeting also features a guest speaker to talk about specific issues, new programs, and other topics, and a question-and-answer period.

"I want Coffee with the Principal to be like sitting down with friends

and neighbors," explained Principal Balser. "Parents should feel welcome and comfortable, and free to ask any question they want."

The next meeting will be held in the evening so that parents who work during the day can attend - so unfortunately no pancakes! But refreshments will still be served.

Coffee with the Principal

November 15, 6:00 PM

December 14, 8:30 AM

For more information, contact Monroe Clark Middle School at 619-563-6801 Ext. 2301.



Above: Barbra Balser, principal of Monroe Clark Middle School, answers parent questions at the Coffee with the Principal in October
Below: Parents volunteers help make breakfast for the first meeting



Reporte Final de ELAC 2005-2007

Por Sara Barraza
ELAC, Monroe Clark Middle School

Mi nombre es Sara Barraza, tengo una hija en el grado 12 en la escuela Hoover, y un hijo en el 8 grado en Monroe Clark. A través de éste medio quiero cumplir con un compromiso que tengo con padres y estudiantes de la Escuela Secundaria Monroe Clark.

Durante los años 2005-2007, fui la Presidenta electa del comité ELAC (English Learners Advisory Committee), de esta escuela, poniendo todo mi corazón y mi compromiso como tal.

El trabajo que se hizo fué siempre el mejor y el equipo que me rodeo fue excelente. Cada una de mis compañeras aportó grandes cosas para el comité, siempre en apoyo a la educación de nuestros hijos.

Agradezco profundamente a cada una de las personas que fueron parte de éste comité, a los padres que estuvieron de apoyo, y a cada uno de los voluntarios que siempre han estado ahí, para ayudarnos. Quiero decirles que sin ustedes, nada de las metas que había en mi mente cuando iniciaba mi periodo como presidenta, hubieran sido posibles sin las voluntarias. Hoy, puedo decir doblemente orgullosa: ¡Gracias por todo su apoyo, y por confiar en mí! Juntas recorrimos el camino, y el éxito de lo que dejamos nos pertenece.

Gracias también a la Directora del Centro de Padres, Laura Ángel Zavala; por su apoyo incondicional. A Martha González le agradezco todo su entusiasmo y empuje; y al Profesor Armando Cataño quiero darle las gracias por todo su tiempo, dedicación, apoyo y su trabajo.

Gracias a todos los padres de las escuelas y de la comunidad, por su asistencia a nuestra celebración de las fiestas patrias, que tienen como objetivo fomentar nuestra cultura en un ambiente familiar.

Este es el reporte para ustedes, de lo que me comprometí a lograr como presidenta:

- ◆ Consolidar al Comité.
- ◆ Involucrar a los padres en talleres y entrenamientos.
- ◆ Organizar la primer kermés del 15 de septiembre, con motivo de la independencia de México. Este fué nuestro tercer año.
- ◆ Fundar la beca "15 de septiembre" para un estudiante graduado de la escuela Hoover, a través de un concurso literario; y con fondos recaudados de la kermés. Ya se entrego la primera beca
- ◆ La "plaza Comunitaria", que es un programa que ofrece el Consulado de México, para que los adultos reciban sus certificados de estudios estudios. La "Placita", ofrece clases de alfabetización, primaria, secundaria y preparatoria; y al terminar sus estudios reciben su certificado. Agragando que la escuela Plaza Prograso A-Z, como asi la llamaron los estudiantes involucrados, ha escrito una beca y esperamos poder ganarla para beneficiar a todos los estudiantes que han creído en el proyecto.

Aquí debo de agregar que, gracias a la gran pasión y amor por servir a la comunidad de nuestra querida Directora, Laura Angel-Zavala y de Martha Gonzalez, su colaboradora; que le dieron forma a este sueño, y hoy, cerca de 24 padres se están beneficiando de este programa.

También quiero mencionar también que desde el año 2003, he sido miembro activo de Latinos y Latinas en Acción, una Organización con base comunitaria, que ha apoyado mi proceso de desarrollo como líder de la comunidad. Esta relación y compromiso con el grupo, me ha ayudado a tener una visión clara sobre el trabajo voluntario y comunitario.

A todos ustedes, muchas gracias por permitirme aprender de ustedes cada día y por su confianza.

Dads' Clubs in City Heights Continue to Grow

By

Ken Woods, Dads' Club Coordinator and Claire Johns, Dads' Club Intern

Building on the success of Dads' Club at Rosa Parks Elementary School, the program is expanding this year to include three more City Heights schools: Florence Griffith Joyner Elementary, Alexander Hamilton Elementary and Monroe Clark Middle School. The last of this list is especially important since Clark is the first middle school in San Diego to have a Dads' Club.

Dads' Club therefore will be breaking new ground and adapting to serve an older age group at Clark, but the focus of the program remains the same: encouraging parents to be more involved in their children's studies and daily lives, supporting positive male role models for them, and having some fun together.

This is easier said than done since many fathers in City Heights work long hours. Others don't live in the same home as their children or are absent from their lives. As a result, a lot of fathers don't attend school meetings, and can feel uncomfortable at school because they are in unfamiliar surroundings with few other men. But when it comes to Dad's Club, being the "dad" is not limited to a male parent – it can be an uncle, grandfather, adult brother or cousin, or any other male who cares about the child.

Whatever the case, it's often still hard to find the time. The purpose of Dads' Club is to make it easier. Meetings are once a month, begin at

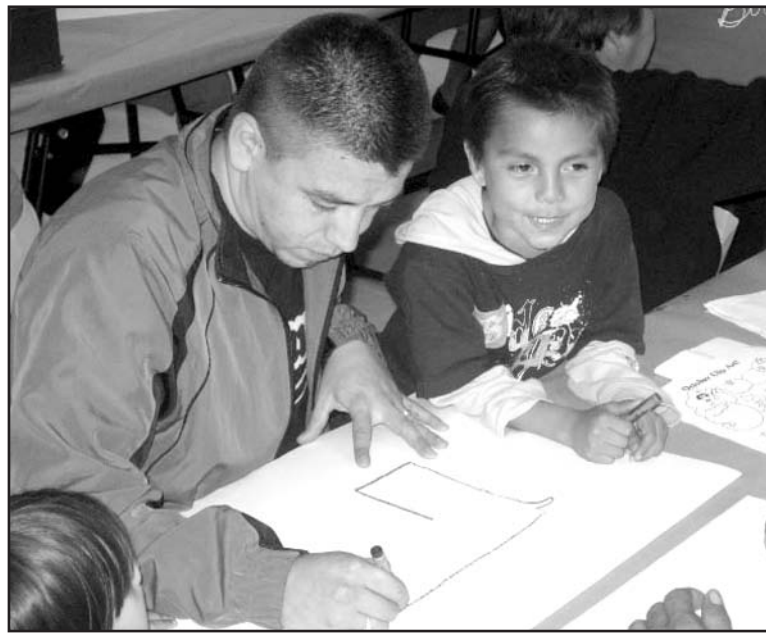
6:00 pm, and are held at school. All children in the family are welcome, no matter what age, and there's always a snack first followed by a special game or fun activity.

Dads get to meet other dads, spend time with their families, and give moms a few precious minutes to themselves. Dads also decide what kinds of activities they would like to participate in. Each Dads' Club has an advisory committee of dedicated volunteer dads who meet monthly to discuss the needs, desires and plans of the Dads' Club at their school. Previous activities have included games, raffles, sports, making Mother's Day cards,

meeting members of the fire department, a Father's Day event and end of the year celebration, but dads are free to suggest anything that supports the goals of the program.

Dads like Stephen Boyle from Rosa Parks are a great example of the leadership role that Dads' Club members can take. He is an advisory committee member and has gone over and above in his participation and support of Dads' Club. Not only has he been involved in every advisory committee meeting, Stephen has become an active member of the Anti-Violence Committee and helps promote the Dads' Clubs at Clark Middle, Hamilton Elementary and Florence Griffith Joyner Elementary. "Since being involved with the Dads' Club I've been having more fun with my kids and don't see how a dad could not want that," he told families during our end of the year celebration.

Support for the expansion of Dads' Club in City Heights has also come from Dr. Dorothy Zirkle, Director of Community Schools Programs for Price Charities. Dr. Zirkle recognized the value of the Dads' Club at Rosa Parks Elementary School and encouraged developing clubs at other nearby schools. Assistance has also come from local businesses that share the values and concepts of Dads' Club such as Dovetail Marketing in San Marcos.



Dads and kids at Rosa Parks Elementary work together on anti-violence posters during Dads Club.

Owner Jon Fein has donated raffle items and is willing to continue to help the program in any way he can.

Finally, Dads' Club has been successful thanks to moms who promote the program and encourage all dads and children to get involved – they even suggest that we have meetings more often!

Through the help of all these supporters, Dads' Club has been able to make a positive impact at Rosa Parks Elementary since the program began nearly two years ago. This year, with the extension of the program to Florence Joyner Elementary, Alexander Hamilton Elementary, and Monroe Clark Middle School, Dads' Club will work toward making an impact on an even larger part of the City Heights community.



Coordinator Ken Woods explains the purpose of Dads' Club to Clark parents

Come check out the next Dads' Club meeting and join in the fun if you have children at any of the participating City Heights schools:

Rosa Parks Elementary:

November 30

December 20

Florence Joyner Elementary:

November 15

December 13

January 31

Alexander Hamilton Elementary:

December 18

January 29

Monroe Clark Middle School:

November 6

December 11

If you have any questions, contact program coordinator Ken Woods at 619-795-2036

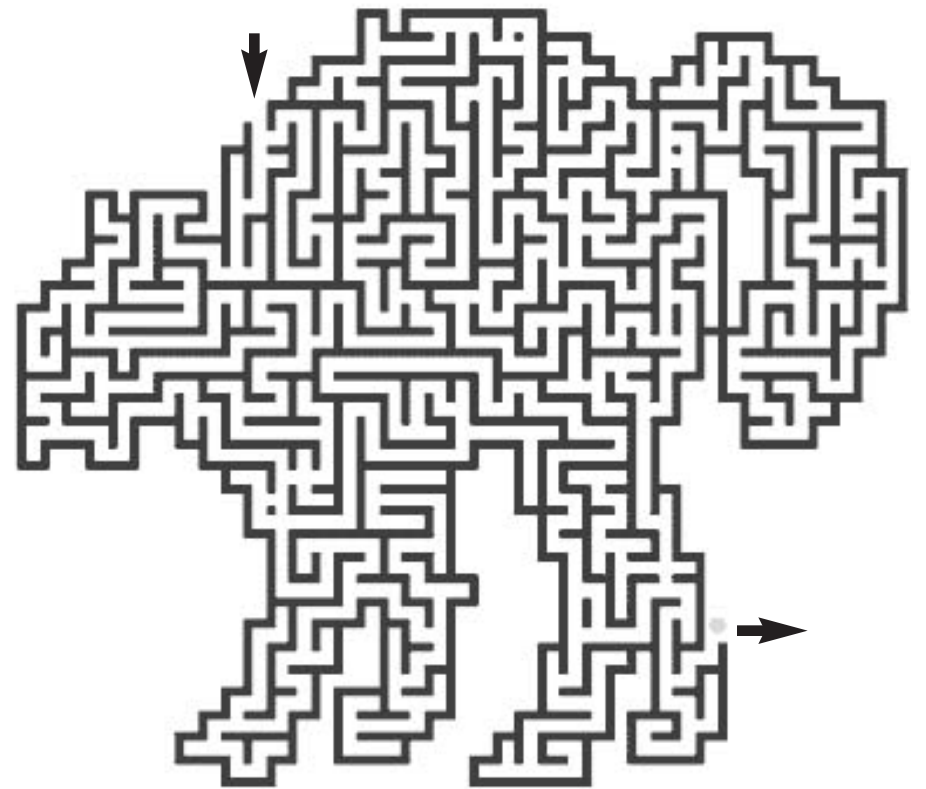
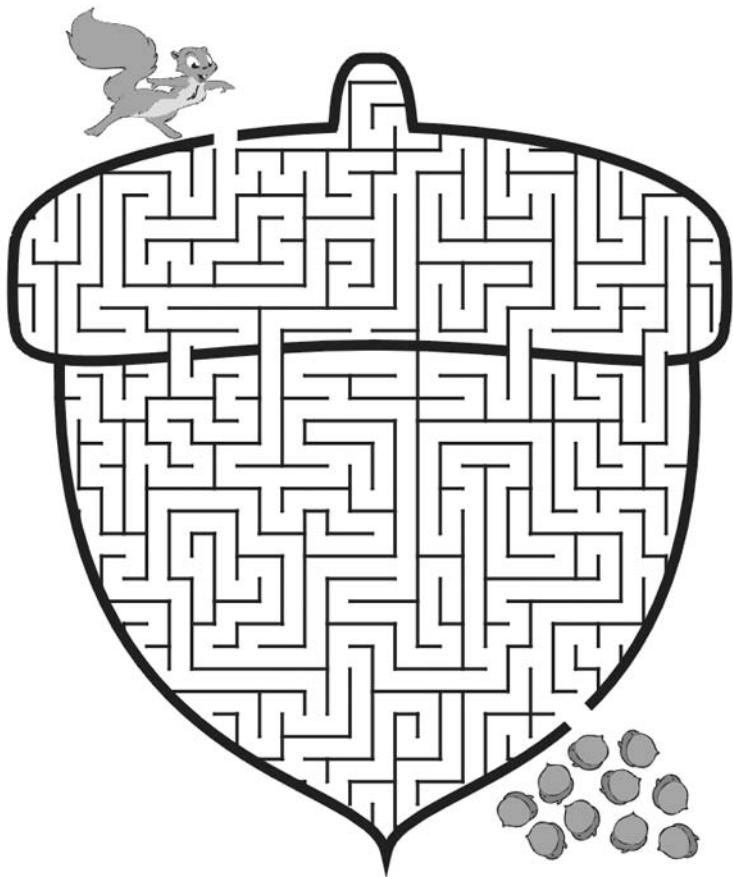


Clark dads get into the Halloween spirit for the "My Daddy's a Mummy" activity -- just one of the many fun things that kids and dads get to do at Dads' Club.

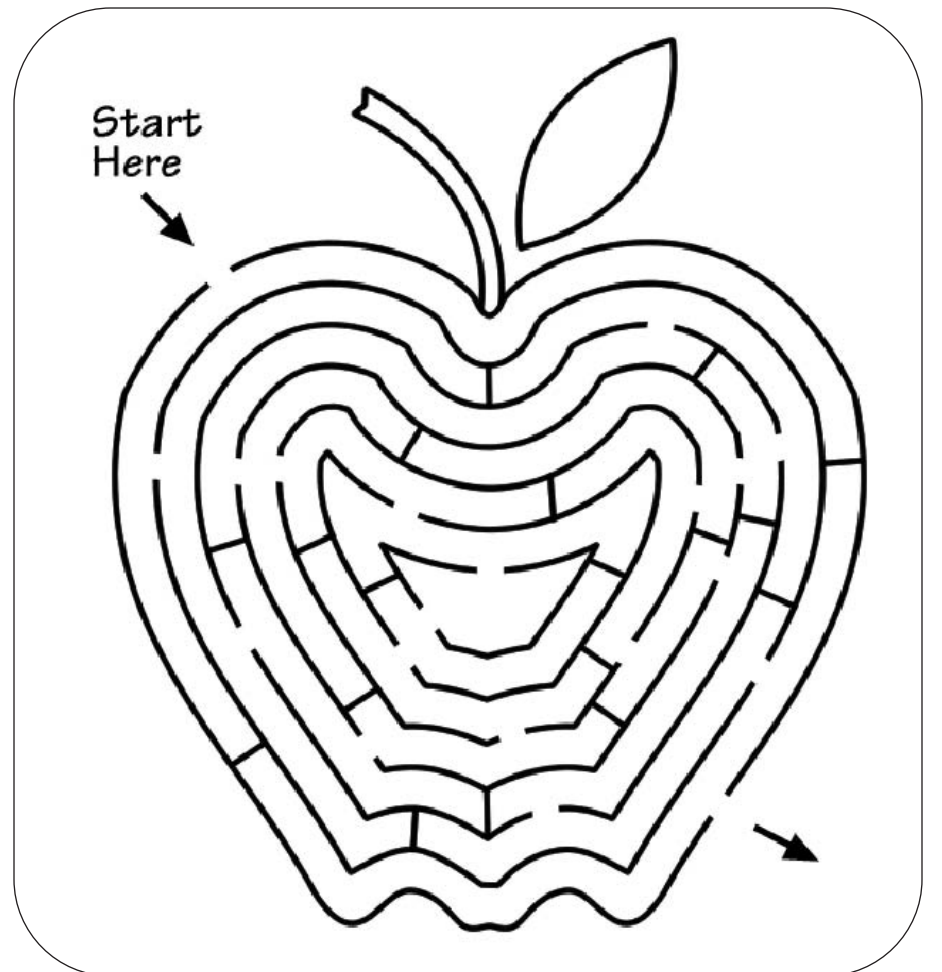
FUN ZONE

MAZE MANIA

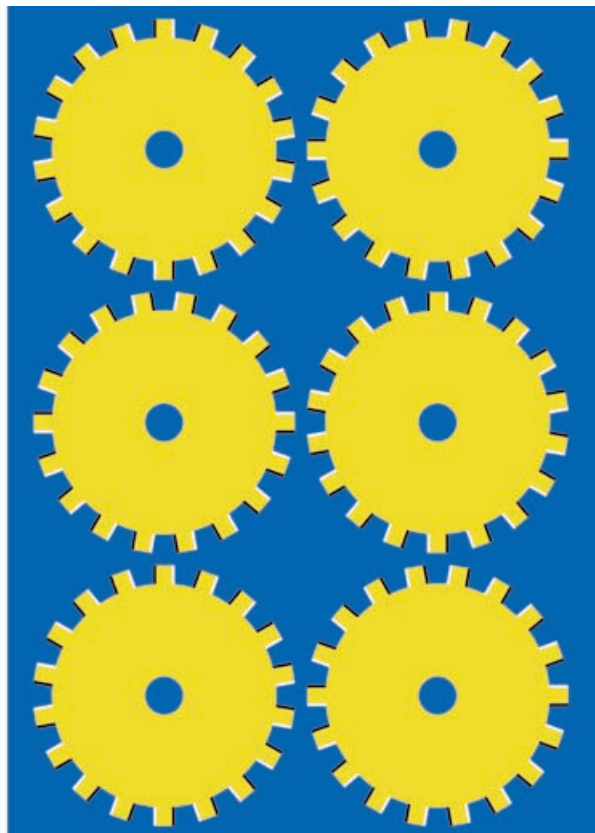
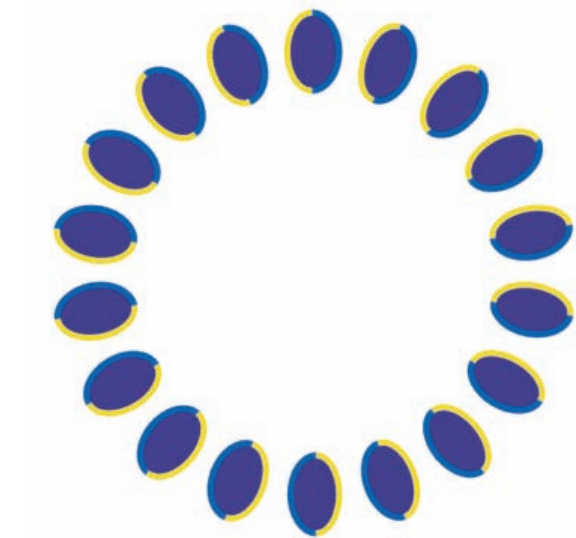
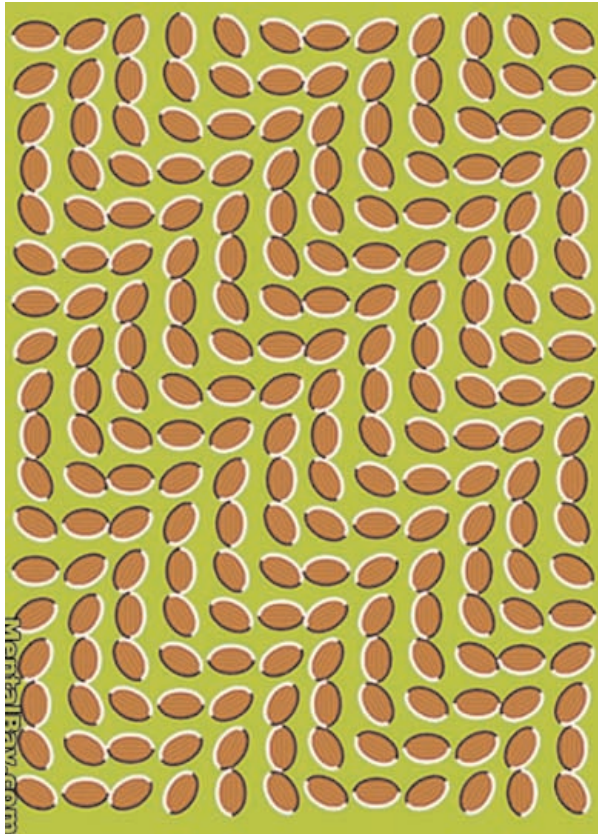
Help the squirrel through the maze to find its acorns



Horse Hunt: How many horses can you find in this picture?



illin illusions



FUN FACTS

What is the world's largest amphibian?

First, it's helpful to know what an amphibian is! Amphibians are four-legged animals that live both on land and water, like frogs, toads and salamanders. Amphibians hatch from eggs laid in water and they start life with gills and swim with their tails like fish. But then an unusual transformations happens: they begin to grow legs, their tails start to shrink, and their gills turn into lungs for breathing air. Turtles and crocodiles also are born from eggs and live on both land and water, but aren't amphibians. Why not? All amphibians change, or undergo a metamorphosis, like when a tadpole turns into a frog. But when a baby lizard or turtle is born, it already has four legs, breathes air, and looks like a tiny version of an adult – it doesn't metamorphosize, so it's a reptile.

So what's the largest amphibian? Some frogs can weigh up to 7 pounds and jump more than 10 feet. That's a lot of frog – but still small compared to the giant salamanders of China and Japan, which can weigh up to 50 pounds and grow to five feet long! These huge and slimy creatures live in cold mountain streams and rivers where they eat just about anything they can suck into their mouth, including crayfish, snails, fish, worms, insects and even small mammals like rats and mice.

Giant salamanders spend most of the day hiding in the water under large rocks or ledges, coming out at night to hunt. They can breathe both on land and underwater, staying immersed for long periods by absorbing oxygen in the water through their skin. Their lifespan can be more than 50



The largest salamanders are found in China. Because they rely on other senses, their eyes are very small.



The hellbender is the largest salamander in North America. It can live more than 30 years.

years, and they have existed on earth for more than 20 or 30 million years. But they are highly endangered due to habitat destruction.

There are some big salamanders in the U.S. too, but not nearly as large as their Asian relatives. The largest in North America is called the hellbender. They also live in cold and fast-moving mountain streams. The biggest are about 30 inches long and live for about 30 years. The heart of their range includes Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee as well as many neighboring states, but not west of Missouri.



The Pacific Giant Salamander can be a foot long.

California also has some big salamanders. Like the others, the Pacific Giant Salamander lives in cold, clear streams and mountain lakes from northern California to southwestern British Columbia. They can grow to over one foot long. If bothered, they may produce a sharp, low-pitched yelp similar to a dog's bark, and they are known to have a painful bite.

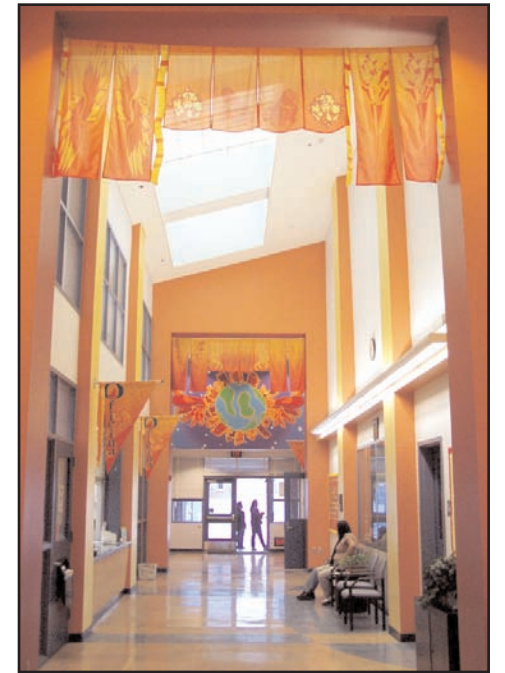
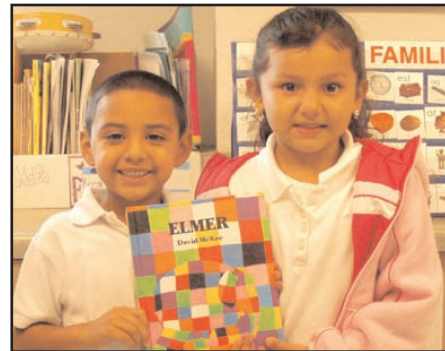
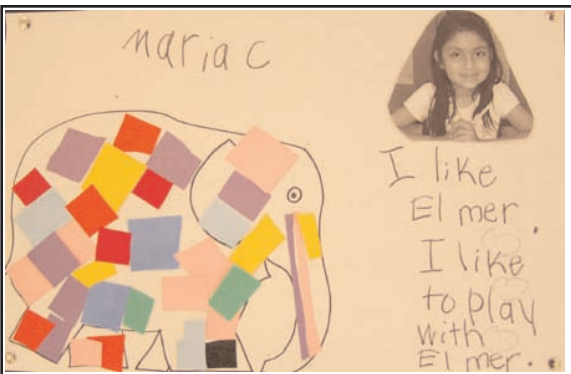
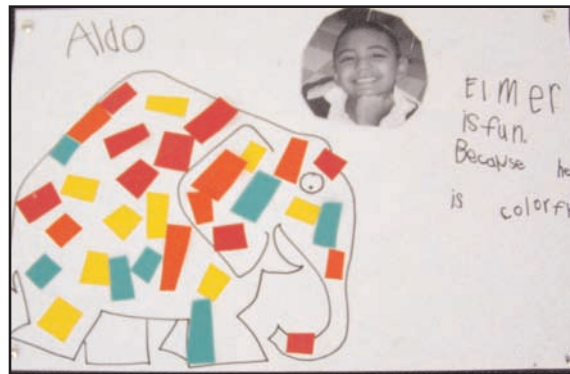


Whether it grows into a tiny frog or a giant salamander, all amphibians start life as a tadpole.

Student Art Showcase



Students in Rose Tanonis' first grade class at Rosa Parks Elementary have been learning about what makes each person special and unique. They read *Elmer* by David McKee, a story about an unusually colored elephant who enjoyed being different, and then got to make their own versions of Elmer. They also made self-portraits about something that makes them special.



Clark Hallway Makeover

Sixth graders and other new students at Clark Middle School were welcomed to the campus by a completely redesigned entrance hall in the administration office. The makeover is the work of more than a dozen 7th and 8th grade students who helped with designs, colors, and even painting the walls. They were assisted by artist Lynn Susholtz of ART Produce Gallery who has worked on a variety of school and public art projects. With the support of the City Heights Collaborative, Price Charities and San Diego Unified, she will begin working with students and staff at Hoover on a makeover of the main office and counseling building.



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.

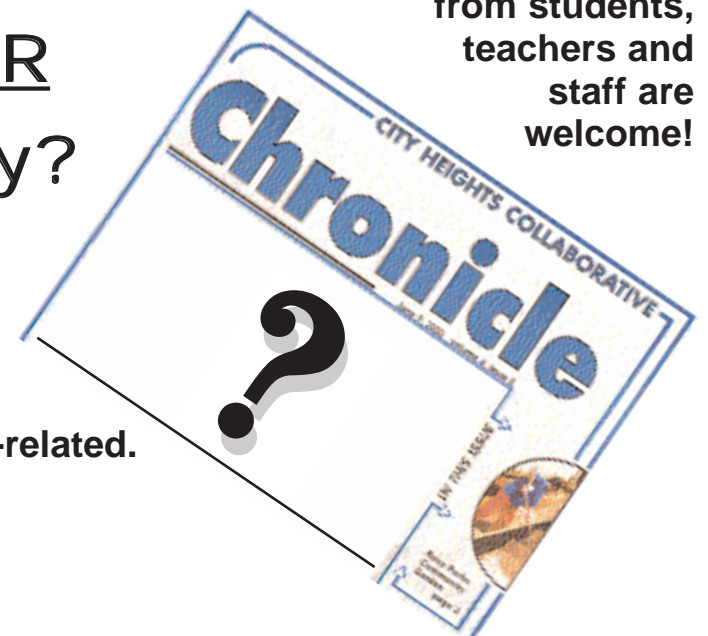
The content of the *Collaborative Chronicle* reflects the numerous innovative strategies of the City Heights Educational Collaborative, as well as the many other positive attributes of these schools and their students, staff and teachers.

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What's YOUR Story?

Stories should be school or education-related.

Newspaper articles from students, teachers and staff are welcome!



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