

# Calendar

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17, 2009

• **Movie – Silas Marner.** A man, who chose a life of solitude, suddenly has a life-changing encounter with an orphaned child and discovers the meaning of fatherhood. It's a Father's Day special with Ben Kingsley at the helm. Beginning at 1:30 p.m. and followed by discussion. Jolsyn Center, 1601 Valley Dr., Manhattan Beach. Free event, all are welcome. 310-372-9505

• **CERT Annual Meeting.** Manhattan Beach Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) annual meeting. 6:30 p.m. at the Joslyn Community Center, 1601 Valley Drive. "Citizens Helping Neighbors, and Our City"

**UPCOMING**

• **Fun Class for Kids on Etiquette and Social Skills.** The City of Manhattan Beach Parks & Recreation Department proudly announces the return of its popular course in good manners by etiquette instructor Dianeh O'Farrill. "Etiquette and Social Skills for Children" Ages 6-12. A two-session course on Saturdays, July 18 & 25, or Saturdays, August 15 & 22, 2009 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Classes will take place at Live Oak Park Hall 1901 Valley Drive Manhattan Beach. Residents \$78; non-residents \$84. For further information, please call The Manhattan Beach Parks & Recreation Department 310-802-5448. This popular educational program covers the basics of good manners needed by children to interact successfully in various social situations. It offers children tips on social interaction that help boost self-esteem and confidence. Manhattan Beach Recreation Services Manager Idris J. Al-Oboudi says: "Mrs. O'Farrill's class has been a very popular course. And now, back by popular demand, we are thrilled that the program will continue under the direction of her niece Dianeh O'Farrill." Dianeh is a graduate of San Diego State University with a bachelor's degree in elementary education and has five years experience in teaching and developing socially confident boys and girls. In addition, she earned her Masters of Arts in Teaching and Multiple Subject Teaching Credential from the University of Southern California. For information please call The Manhattan Beach Parks & Recreation Department (310) 802-5448.

**ONGOING**

• **Renewal Through Art Class.** Renewal Through Art for Seniors is an art class for adults 55 and older. A ten-week session will be offered on Thursdays at the Joslyn Center from 10:30 am to 12:00 pm beginning May 29. A variety of media will be used and techniques demonstrated with the overriding object the student's experience, not the art product. The class is free and students provide their own materials. Pre registration is required. Call the Older Adults Program at (310) 802-5447.

• **Older Adults discussion group.** Come discuss current events, movies, topics of local and national interest, whatever is on your mind. The discussion group meets every Monday from 9:00 a.m. – noon at the Joslyn Community Center, 1601 Valley Drive. For more information please call (310) 802-5447.

• **Play Reading.** Fun and adventure await you. Spontaneous and unrehearsed activity facilitated by KC Johnson and Maria A. Ruiz, two experienced artists in the South Bay, offers each participant a role in scenes chosen for you – or you may bring your own short scenes to read. Every 1st Tuesday from 1:30-3:30 p.m. at Joslyn Center, 1601 Valley Drive, MB. Free Event, Sponsored by Parks and Rec. All are welcome. Info: 310-325-3251 or 310- 540-5635.

• **Play Scrabble.** This event is sponsored by the Manhattan Beach Parks and Rec and facilitated by the Manhattan Beach Senior Citizens Resource Committee. 1-3-1-1-2-3-1-1 (Scrabble). Play Scrabble every 1st and 3rd Thursday at Joslyn Community Center, 1601 Valley Drive. A free event, experience not required and all are welcome (4-1-1-3-1-3-1). 1:30 – 4 p.m. Info 310-802-5447.

• **Poetry Reading Circle** Recent/longtime, amateur and wannabe poets are welcome to read their own o favorite poems every 2nd and 4th Tuesday from 1:30-3:30 p.m. at Joslyn Center, 1601 Valley Drive, MB. Free Event, Sponsored by Parks and Rec. All are welcome. Info 802-5447.

• **Petanque, French game of Boules** at Live Oak Field, Manhattan Beach. Play Petanque (played by 17 million people in France), an outdoor social game for every lever of fitness; no experience required. Sponsored by Parks and Rec. All are welcome every 2nd and 4th Thursday 1-3 p.m adjacent to Joslyn Center. Info 310-802-5447. •

# School Board Recognizes Achievements by Employees, Volunteers and Students

By Tina Steck

On June 3, during the second-to-last meeting of the 2008/09 school year, the Board of the Manhattan Beach Unified School District took a well-deserved recess from dealing with the "June gloom" of an imminent budget deadline to recognize and savor all that is good about the District's cohesive community of employees, volunteers and students.

At the May 20 meeting, the Board took action to reinstate many teachers and staff by restoring reasonable class sizes in Grades K through 5 as well as in ninth grade English. Additionally, the Board voted to reinstate the grade level advisor at Manhattan Beach Middle School, an educational advisor at Mira Costa High School, and at-risk counselors at both sites. At the June 3 meeting, discussion of potential reinstatement scenarios continued, but the Board deferred any further decision-making to the June 16 meeting. The Board is also preparing to produce a mandated three-year balanced budget by the end of June.

The District's Trustees and Administrators took the opportunity on June 3 to publicly recognize special achievements by employees, students and volunteer organizations. MBUSD Superintendent Dr. Beverly Rohrer praised the "shining leadership" provided by the parents at the helm of the seven PTA groups and the Manhattan Beach Education Foundation. "I have worked in many school districts and on many boards and foundations, but none has reached the height of the mountain of work accomplished by our staff, our students, our community, our parents, our PTAs and our Ed Foundation," said Rohrer.

The Teacher Spotlight award for June was presented to Katherine Whittaker-Stopp, who has been teaching in Manhattan Beach for 16 years, served as a teacher at many different grade levels, and is currently a science specialist at Robinson Elementary School. Robinson Principal Nancy Doyle described Stopp as an intelligent and creative teacher who deeply understands her students. Stopp is the teacher "who kids come back to visit year after year," added Doyle.

Stopp's remarks set the tone for the rest of the meeting when she graciously implored the packed meeting room to also recognize the unique talents and outstanding qualities of Kacy Walker, the colleague and physical education instructor who nominated her for the award. Stopp described Walker as a P.E. specialist who "builds character" in her students, doing much more than teaching them to play games. "The greatest thing about me standing up here today is that I get to say kudos to this person, so let's spotlight her too, because she is phenomenal," said Stopp

about Walker, who was also in attendance.

Edie Babbe, Co-President of the Manhattan Beach Council of PTAs, thanked all the PTA leaders and volunteers and announced that the seven PTAs logged a total 346,000 volunteer hours and collectively spent close to \$1.6 million in funds raised in support of the students and teachers during the school year. She thanked her council members, including Co-President Denise Ellis, Historian and Art Reflections Chair Heather Hoffman, and District Liaison Faith Lyons. She also thanked this year's PTA Presidents: Cindy Ellenberg (Mira Costa High School); Katie Van Harten and Ellen Beatty (Manhattan Beach Middle School); Susy Werre (Meadows Elementary School); Larry Sidney (Grand View Elementary School); Jennifer Williams and Marla Zaslansky (Pacific Elementary School); Marjie Block and Stewart Bogen (Pennekamp Elementary School); and Lori Keenan and Franca Stadvec (Robinson).

Board President Nancy Hersman thanked Babbe for her tireless hard work and leading the weekly Wednesday "Blue Team" activities that involved parents as advocates for their schools. "We don't know how we would do it without you," said Hersman. "When I heard she was stepping down as PTA Council president, I thought, what job is she taking next? You can't leave," said Hersman. Babbe will continue to organize the annual Capital Convoy to Sacramento and other legislative advocacy efforts for the schools.

Rohrer singled out Ellen Rosenberg, the outgoing MBEF President, for her outstanding leadership. "I know how hard you work and about the personal sacrifices you have made," said Rohrer, "but the future of our 6,300 students is in better hands because of you." The Ed Foundation raised over \$4.1 million for the District, which significantly offset the \$7.8 million in state cuts to the District's 2009/10 budget.

A meeting highlight was the annual recognition of classified employees. The District Employee of the Year was awarded to Michael Delgado, Teacher Support Assistant for the first grade at Pennekamp and an MBUSD employee for nine years. Principal Dale Keldrauk described Delgado as "an absolutely incredible guy," with a "fantastic sense of humor." Keldrauk read a letter from Delgado's supervising teacher, who credited Delgado with having "a positive effect as a role model to all the students in the classroom everyday." Delgado is currently studying to become a teacher for the visually impaired.

Classified Employees of the Year were also recognized for each school site and

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