



# NOTICIAS DE LA CASA

LA CASA DE SAN GABRIEL COMMUNITY CENTER ♦ AUTUMN, 2011



**SAVE THE DATE FRIDAY, OCTOBER 7**

## Legendary San Gabriel Country Club hosts La Casa's 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

La Casa's 2011 Annual Awards Dinner, its 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary event, will honor **California Senator Carol Liu, Kaiser Permanente and the San Gabriel Rotary Club**. The dinner is set for **Friday, October 7** at the spectacular San Gabriel Country Club, one of the oldest and most beautiful clubs in Southern California. Come join us!



**San Gabriel Rotary** annually conducts a *Cinco de Mayo* fundraising luncheon promoting our preschool children's bilingual performances. Last year, San Gabriel Rotarians secured a Rotary District 5300 Grant to

renovate the children's bathroom, in addition to making financial contributions, food and clothing donations.



**Kaiser Permanente** has a long history of supporting La Casa financially through grants for our teen violence prevention counseling programs. Kaiser

employees have held "work days" at La Casa



including installation of a garden for the preschool, where the children harvested and ate the vegetables they grew.

**State Senator Carol Liu** has also been a contributor and supporter to La Casa. Sen. Liu's

commitment to children is evident through her community involvements. Sen. Liu's legislative agenda in the Senate includes improving public education and access to early childhood education, increasing access to higher education, and assuring essential services for the elderly, low-income and disabled. She is committed to breaking the cycles of poverty and crime. She has worked tirelessly to improve environmental quality and access to public transportation.

La Casa de San Gabriel staff and supporters are looking forward to gathering at what will be a spectacular evening, this fall. **For tickets or more information, call us at 626.286.2144, or e-mail us at [cheryl.lacasa@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cheryl.lacasa@sbcglobal.net).**

- Larissa De La Cruz

## New faces, fond farewells

La Casa Community Center is pleased to announce the appointment of **Carol Timiraos** as its new Director of Development, where she will oversee La Casa's outreach and fundraising programs.

We would also like to extend our welcome to **Jane BruneTTe**, who has graciously agreed to take on bookkeeping for La Casa; and thank **Julie Barbour**, who served La Casa this past year as bookkeeper. We appreciate the gift of these talented women who help us deliver services every day to the youth and families of San Gabriel and surrounding communities.

## INSIGHTS

### Reflections on a day with La Casa's volunteers

**O**n a beautiful spring day in sunny Southern California, a diverse group gathered in the Garden Room of Almansor Court to break bread. They, the volunteers and staff, were being honored for their hard work on behalf of La Casa.

After a delicious lunch, each individual was called forward and presented with a certificate of appreciation, as **Brenda Rincon** and **Cheryl Prentice** shared with the audience thoughts that each recipient had offered concerning why service at La Casa was so special to them.

If anyone is looking for a reason to affirm or reaffirm their commitment to La Casa, all they had to do was to listen to these remarkable individuals. These mothers, fathers, grandparents of La Casa's students, staff members and community volunteers spoke from the heart. The **pride** on their faces as they were thanked and recognized for their service was **heartwarming**.

There are many ways to help La Casa. Do you have a special hobby – sewing, knitting, crocheting, paper crafts – to name a few? Would you like to share the fruits of your hobby with others? Do you have time to help with this newsletter? Can you donate a gift card or write an extra check? Everything you can do is greatly appreciated.

Service at La Casa is a gratifying experience. Our clients are not asking for a handout, but when needed, a helping hand. They give back more than they receive.

*Judi Soule*

## TIDBITS

### La Casa holds the key to summer success for families

**E**very day at La Casa is another opportunity to help our youth and adult patrons achieve greater success in their lives by providing services and opportunities that grow their potential. Here's some of what we have had going on this summer at La Casa de San Gabriel:

**Summer Preschool.** Summer preschool had a total of 34 students who came daily. This was a transitional program that moved the children from group to individual use of materials. Each child had his/her own plastic basket for crayons, pencils and supplies.

There were weekly nature walks and trips to the library. Often they were accompanied by the tutoring students. Three of the preschoolers are already able to read simple books. They took their books and read to Jose Parra, the children's librarian at the San Gabriel Library. He was appropriately surprised and appreciative!

♦ ♦ ♦

**Summer Tutoring Program Begins.** This summer nine children, ranging from first through seventh grades, signed up to participate in a summer tutoring program held at La Casa Community Center. The children received specialized tutoring in reading, writing, and math provided by two credentialed teachers.

This program used the art form of Origami to address academic needs while keeping the students engaged. Students also participated in a Reading Buddy Program with the preschool children who were in session for the summer. Older children assume the role of the "expert" reader with their chosen book, practicing reading the book to build fluency before meeting their preschool reading buddies. This helps build confidence and success while also providing a good reading role model for the younger children. Thanks to our wonderful teachers, **Karen Estrada** and **Steve Mion**, both from McKinley School in San Gabriel, for their efforts.

♦ ♦ ♦

**For Our Adult Patrons.** La Casa staff is working with representatives from Peace over Violence to set up an expanded program in which a counselor will meet weekly with clients here at La Casa. **We are grateful to so many of our friends who help build and strengthen our families through their efforts!**

**GREG FORGATCH**, *Chairman of the Board*

## CEO REPORT



## La Casa's partnerships 'make the world go around'

**L**a Casa's success is due in large part to our extensive network of partners who help us achieve our goals in ways large and small. This summer we have continued working with volunteer resources to make great strides in the areas of facilities, clean up and office work. And our friends, as always, are the source of good news, support and encouragement. Here's just a sampling.



**Friends Helping La Casa.** Our friend and supporter **Jane Vasquez** has made a charitable gift annuity to the Presbyterian Foundation, designated for a permanent fund honoring La Casa co-founder **Angelita Lizarraga**. We appreciate Jane's kind and continuing support of La Casa's mission. For more information about how you can contribute to La Casa's mission through the Presbyterian Foundation, call us at 626.286.2144, or learn more from the Presbyterian Foundation website at:

<http://www.presbyterianfoundation.org>.



**Preschool Partnerships.** **Arcadia Presbyterian Church** will feature La Casa as a mission partner at its Alternative Christmas event, set for November. The program will feature the preschool children of La Casa.



**New Horizons as Church Assists La Casa.** La Casa hosted 23 teenagers and four adult advisors from Horizon Presbyterian Church in Phoenix, Arizona for two days of work camp. It's a Presbyterian tradition to have young people travel to help out. Our friends from Horizon tutored children, aided our staff and parents in the preschool, cleared out two offices, scrubbed and painted them and reassembled as much as possible. They trimmed and neatened our landscaping, too, and sent us a lovely letter afterwards. We are so privileged to have had their support.



**Helping Hands.** Preschool mom **Florence Simpson** helped write a grant to expand healthy eating to preschool families. The concept, called "upside down tomato gardening" is a great experience for our children, and is expanding to other produce that can be grown in limited space.

**New Community Services Available.** La Casa staff recently enjoyed a visit to Pasadena's new CHAP (Community Health Alliance of Pasadena) facility, located on East Del Mar Blvd., adjacent to Huntington Hospital's new Urgent Care Facility. We were joined on the tour by the clinic's director, who provided us with useful information we can share with our clients.

Children and families can be referred to programs where they can receive medical and dental care. Fees are on a sliding scale. Nine La Casa families have already been recruited to pre-register at the clinic so that when someone needs to be seen, they don't have to fill out all the paperwork when they need to visit. We welcome this critically needed service, especially for the adults in the family. All these and more are just in a day's work at La Casa, where serving the needs of San Gabriel families remains both a commitment and a passion.

**CHERYL PRENTICE**, *Chief Executive Officer*

### LA CASA PROFILE

## Who is Fabian Valdez?

A former math teacher, a longtime board member of La Casa, the recipient of several awards from notable charities and organizations in the San Gabriel Valley, and a law enforcement officer with the San Gabriel Police



Department. These all describe **Fabian Valdez**, one of La Casa's stalwart friends.

Fabian is an active community member. His passion is evident through his activities. Over the past several years Fabian has performed a variety of volunteer roles; he was most recently the facilities chair. In that role, Fabian organized a working group of volunteers to oversee the maintenance of facilities at La Casa, including roofing repairs and insulation for walls, to ensure a safe and productive environment for the children.

Fabian also leads several other programs at La Casa, including domestic violence, parenting skills, drug prevention and gang violence. He told us, "Early education and empowerment in the subjects around you -- being a better person and having knowledge about the community you live in -- is the key to getting out of poverty." Fabian is truly a passionate and giving individual -- we at La Casa, and the San Gabriel community as a whole, are grateful to have him!

*Larissa De La Cruz*



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**FROM OUR SCRAPBOOK**

**Did You Know?**

The original Administration Building at La Casa has a rich relationship to San Gabriel history.

The attractive Mediterranean edifice at 203 E. Mission Road, which today houses our offices and pre-school classrooms, originally opened as a maternity hospital to serve patients in San Gabriel. This was well before the current San Gabriel Valley Medical Center first opened its doors in the 1960s.

The historic building continues to play a role in nurturing the health and vitality of San Gabriel families through our commitment to family education, health, wellness, and food distribution.

*La Casa is a partner in San Gabriel's Centennial Celebration scheduled for 2013. Look for occasional stories from La Casa's history in future issues of Noticias.*

**GIVE TO LA CASA**

**We can do more, with your help**

La Casa has seen dramatic increases this year in the number of San Gabriel area residents needing assistance. We are grateful for the support of so many donors; *Noticias* will periodically salute recent donors, residents and businesses that have stepped up to the plate. But the demand is great, and we can do more. Inside this month's newsletter you will find a donation envelope. We urge you to help La Casa continue providing critical services to the community's families in need by sending a donation - any amount will help.

- Please find enclosed my donation in the amount of \_\_\_\_\_.
- I pledge a donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_. Please invoice me at the address below.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_  
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*La Casa de San Gabriel thanks you for your support*