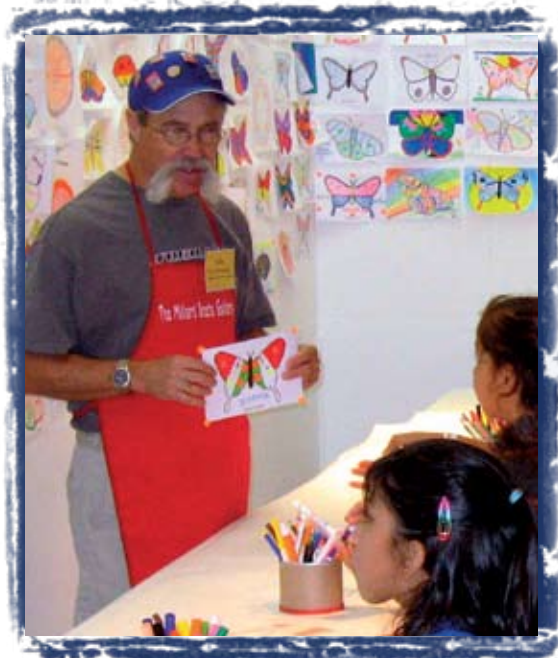


Connecting with Students Keeps this Volunteer Engaged



John Kramer, Docent

Retirement was a welcome and deserved milestone in John Kramer's life, but he missed the interaction with people, particularly young people. Kramer was the superintendent of recreation for the city of San Bernardino, which meant children and teens were a big part of his job. During his career, he oversaw the activities of seven community centers and created some great programs, including a mentoring program that saw adult volunteers, many of them city employees, helping kids with their homework and serving as positive adult role models.

When retirement came in 2001, the then 54-year-old was not ready to sit down. A chance volunteer spot during the Sam Maloof exhibit at the Millard Sheets Center for the Arts turned into a serendipitous long-term volunteer relationship between Kramer and Fairplex.

"I've always loved the L.A. County Fair, and I thought this was a great way to get closer," Kramer said.

For the past seven Fairs, Kramer has served as a docent at the center, helping out school children with art workshops, and as a greeter

with the FairKids Discovery Club.

"I spent my career working with youngsters, so I was looking to do something with kids," Kramer said. "With what I do at the center, I like that there is an educational component."

While the children who visit the art exhibits aren't always old enough to appreciate art, they get seriously involved in the interactive workshops, according to Kramer.

"They love the hands-on projects. For the Maloof exhibit, they built small chairs. We've had a camera obscura out there. These are the type of things that help interpret the art for them, make it tangible."

Enthusiastic volunteers like Kramer are the heart of the Millard Sheets Center, said Cris Martinez, the center's public programs coordinator. "They are the ones who are most in touch with our visitors. And John, in particular, can always be counted on to be of help."

Having first attended the Fair more than 50 years ago, Kramer has seen several changes and is expanding his own personal preferences.

"As a kid, all you wanted to do was get to the Fun Zone. Now, I enjoy the art exhibits, the handmade crafts and the student-generated art. It's all still very special to me."

To volunteer for the Foundations' programs, contact the development department at (909) 865-4207.

Millard Sheets Center for the Arts at Fairplex

Agriculture Programming Shines



FairView Farms, a fun, educational and interactive look at the world of agriculture and livestock, received the prestigious Merrill Award from Western Fairs Association (WFA) for its programming during the 2007 L.A. County Fair. Named after WFA founder Louis S. Merrill, the award is given to entries that clearly demonstrate leadership, vision and excellence. This is the third Merrill Award bestowed upon the L.A. County Fair. Previous wins were for overall marketing campaign (2001) and display advertising (1985).

The Merrill Award was the icing on the cake, as the Fair also received nine other awards, including three first-place standings: programming for children; agricultural educational programming; and fairtime programs/schedules. Second place prizes went to radio advertising; display newspaper single; display newspaper series; pamphlets, brochures & direct mail; and fairtime website. An honorable mention was given for innovative advertising.

FairView Farms is made possible through the generous support of Fairplex Education Foundation donors through gifts to the annual fund. To make a donation in support of the award-winning FairView Farms, visit www.fairplex.org or call the development department at (909) 865-4207.

Fairplex Education Foundation



Essay Winners Receive Scholarships

I believe in the future of agriculture, with a faith born not of words but of deeds . . .

The opening lines of the Future Farmers of America creed exemplify the five winners of the 2007 Junior Livestock Auction Agricultural Scholarship essay contest, conducted during the 2007 Fair: Ashley Assad, of Brea; Brian Evans, of Chino Hills; Matthew Murray, of Canyon Country; Kayla Pauwels, of Fontana; and James Austin Ryan III, of Guadalupe. Each student deservedly received \$1,000 toward their college educations. They all share a love of animals and agriculture, with plans to pursue their passion beyond their high school years, either through majoring in veterinary medicine or continuing as good stewards for the livestock industry.

Rewarding these teens' commitment to an enterprise with strong roots in the region was made possible through a generous donation. To support agricultural interests for students throughout Southern California, contact the development department.

