

Wheel Deal • • • • •

Communities look to businesses, organizations for bus sponsorship

The first year Bonita Unified School District teacher Rosemary Henderson brought a class to the L.A. County Fair through the FairKids Discovery Club field trip program, descriptions of wonderment and amazement came from the children. They saw cows and goats, potted seedlings to take home and nurture, and traipsed through America's Kids. But for one first grader, what stole the show was the bus ride to and from the Fair.

"He'd never been on one before," Henderson recalled with a smile.

Limited funds and increasing enrollments find school districts searching for ways to tighten their financial belts. Unfortunately, extracurricular activities like the FairKids field trips usually fall within those budget cuts because schools simply do not have the funds for transportation.

Enter the collaborative efforts of Chino Hills, Claremont, Diamond Bar, Glendora, La Verne, Pomona and San Dimas. Community members from these seven cities have joined with the development department to raise funds through the Big Yellow Bus Partnership program to get school children on the road to the L.A. County Fair.

Representatives from the seven cities met recently for an idea exchange, reviewing what has worked in their past fundraising efforts. Pam Richards of Glendora noted the impact of electronic media, saying that all their appeals were made through email with almost all donations received as a result of those emails.

"We did a lot of initial follow up, with a second email or phone call, and sending out brochures on the bus program," Richards said.

Educator Henderson said field trips to the Fair are very beneficial.



The first ride of the day, the big yellow bus.

Fairplex Education Foundation

"The educational side of the Fair has come a long way in a short time," she said. "It's rare to work with an organization of this size that is putting on an event of this magnitude and find that they truly listen and they seek each year to expand the educational offerings available to school students. They make all of this available at no cost to any school."

It costs between \$60 and \$300 for a bus, depending on the school district's contract with the bus company. Any contribution is appreciated. To donate, contact Laura Smolka in the development department at (909) 865-4206 or smolka@fairplex.com.

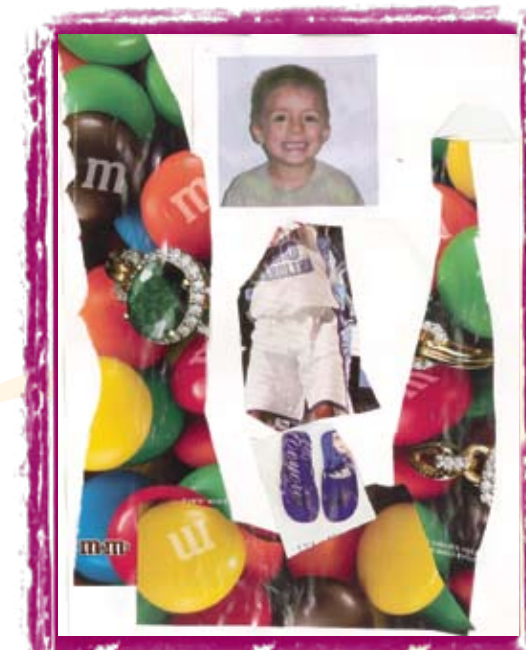
CDC Preschoolers Enjoy art for art's sake • • • • •

Each week a group of preschool students from the Child Development Center (CDC) at Fairplex participates in a hands-on art experience at the Millard Sheets Center for the Arts at Fairplex (MSCAF). "An important part of the art program is making young people familiar with the vocabulary of art so they can differentiate between sculpture and painting," explains Cris Martinez, MSCAF's public programs coordinator. Martinez frequently uses art reproductions as examples; last year the CDC art class visited a real exhibition so they could see first hand the three-dimensional aspects of sculpture and the texture of oil painting.

This quarter, CDC's budding artists are learning about portraits. With thoughtful observation, they discerned that not all heads are round and not all eyes are oval, Martinez explains. Next students tried their hands at re-creating their classmates' likenesses in several mediums — clay, paint and even markers. "Some children really stopped and looked at their models and used appropriate colors for eyes and hair."

The real excitement began when Martinez introduced CDC students to self-portraiture. The young Rembrandts studied their reflections in a mirror to get a sense of what a self-portrait might look like. A digital camera made it easy for the young artists to take photo portraits of each other, a revealing experiment, says Martinez. Although instructed to sit as naturally as possible, many subjects gave in to the temptation to posture for the camera.

The self-portraits are a study in self-expression, says Martinez, some serious, some capturing an enviable, 4-year-old sense of unself-conscious joy.



CDC student's self-portrait collage

Foundations At Fairplex

Living Memory DesCombes tram stop more than just a stop

When Don DesCombes, the founding chair of the Education Foundation and long-time Fair Association member, passed away, many of his friends and family donated in his memory to the Fairplex Education Foundation. Through efforts led by Betty DesCombes and Susan and Gordon DesCombes, all of the money donated was used to fund the education programs of the foundation, which he so passionately supported. But they also wanted to do more. The family decided to donate funds to build a permanent Tram Stop in FairView Farms, Don's favorite part of the L.A. County Fair. During the Fair, school children sat under the cool gazebo to eat lunch, seniors took time out for a quiet moment and mothers with little tykes stopped for a bottle break. The Don DesCombes Tram Stop serves as a living memory to a man who loved the Fair and all it has to offer.

A project such as the Don DesCombes Tram Stop is a wonderful way to honor the memory of a special loved one or recognize individuals who have had a history with the Fair. If you would like to learn more about naming opportunities, contact Susan Dowler at (909) 865-4205.



DesCombes family celebrates the opening of the Don DesCombes Tram Stop.