

The Village Anchor

Century Villages at Cabrillo
Long Beach, California

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Edition 8

Anchoring the Spirit of the Century Villages at Cabrillo Community

Winter 2012

CollaBOOration at its Best!

This year's fun-filled Halloween week kicked off with 250 residents enjoying a community-wide Spooktacular Event organized by 30 California State University Long Beach REC students, headed by Professor Joanne Conely. Festivities included spooky themed game booths, bouncy houses, arts and crafts, face painting, a photo booth, tacos, and entertainment by 102.7 KIIS FM. "This event was for such an amazing cause for a worthy community; the Villages and the community here definitely deserved to have a well-planned Halloween extravaganza" said one CSULB student.

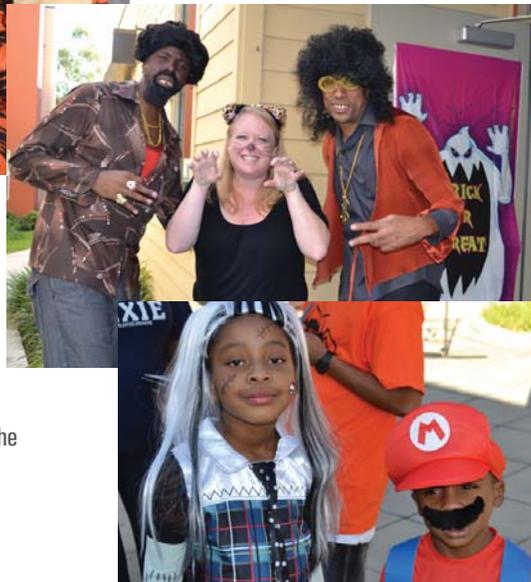
Later in the week, over 100 residents, young and old, lined up to experience the first ever on-site Haunted House. Screams could be heard throughout



the campus as families made their way through the interactive maze filled with live ghouls and goblins, gory displays, and spooky surprises. Just when they thought it was over out of the darkness emerged two more figures, the floating head and as one child described it "the scariest vampire lady ever!" Another child said, "Thank you for building the haunted house for us. This is the coolest thing ever." Despite the cries and protests many got right back in line for another go!

No Halloween would be complete without Trick-or-Treating! Last but not least, over 70 children visited 12 different stops where they filled their bags with treats and showed off their costumes! Everyone came together to give the children an opportunity to enjoy the holiday and make this large campus feel more like a small, friendly neighborhood. Without everyone's efforts most of the children would have had no other opportunity to trick-or-treat.

Residents of all ages were able to enjoy this year's Halloween festivities at Century Villages thanks to the joint efforts from School on Wheels, CSULB, Project PLAY, the Oasis Community Center, Century Housing, CVC staff, and staff and residents from on-site programs including U.S. VETS, New Image, VVRC, and PATH Ventures.



Goodbye Greg After 11 Years

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After more than 11 years of dedicated service to U.S. VETS-Long Beach, Executive Director, Greg McCormack and his family have decided to move back home to Austin, Texas. Greg grew up in Austin, and he is very happy to have moved back home with his wife, Gretchen and their two daughters, Sara and Lily. He said the decision to move was a difficult one, but when Gretchen, who worked at the national office for U.S. VETS, was offered a job in Texas, they welcomed the opportunity to raise their children around family.



Before moving to California, Greg had played in a rock band in Austin which helped him get through his undergraduate and graduate studies. After eight years of performing, the band came to terms with the fact that they would not become rock stars. Greg moved to California, with two other band members, on a whim. Greg planned to live here for one year and attained employment as a Career Counselor for Goodwill.

Greg loved working on helping others so much that his one year plan turned into a twenty-year tenure. During his years at Goodwill, Greg and Steve Peck, now President & CEO of U.S. VETS,

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Goodbye Greg...

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had built an outstanding working relationship which led to Greg's hire at U.S. VETS in August of 2001, as the Workforce Development Director. At that time, the property consisted of many more abandoned buildings and was in need of a clear vision for the future.

Over the years, Greg has contributed incredible effort and enthusiasm toward the growth of what U.S. VETS-Long Beach has become today. He has very much enjoyed and appreciated those same qualities in the many individuals who have worked alongside him. Greg's collaborative endeavors have guided the development and evolution of the many programs that benefit veterans on our campus. The roadmap that this "Rocker" from Austin has left behind will be music to the ears for hundreds of veterans for years to come. We thank you Greg, and wish you the very best!

Century Villages would also like to take this opportunity to welcome Jim Hansen as the newly appointed Executive Director of US VETS-Long Beach. Jim served as a U.S. Army Sergeant in Vietnam, 1968-1969. Since then, he has been serving in the public sector in various capacities of community and economic development in the states of Washington, Nevada and in Southern California. Prior to his appointment as Executive Director, Jim was a member of the US VETS Advisory Council in Long Beach. Welcome to the community!

Honoring Those Who Served

Congratulations to U.S. VETS for the success of their 5th Annual "Honoring Those Who Served" Luncheon on November 9th. Attended by nearly 400 veterans and guests, this annual luncheon honors the men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces and supports U.S. VETS in its ongoing operations.

Also honoring our veterans, the Huntington Beach Elks Lodge returned to Century Villages this past Veterans Day and served up 204 BBQ lunches. "The Elks are truly our Angels," said Linda Maldonado, Operations Manager. "They come and set up everything on their own and do it with such a genuine appreciation for the Veterans on site."

VVRC brought a busload of vets to the Veterans Day celebration aboard the USS Iowa. Vets were able to join in the festivities aboard the U.S.S. Iowa, now docked in San Pedro.

The Village Anchor adds our voice to the choir to say THANK YOU to all our resident Veterans who have served and protected us all. We truly appreciate your service.

Resident Spotlight: Sid Armstrong

Sidney Armstrong adapted well to sunny, Southern California since relocating here three years ago from the cold and snowy climate of Chicago, Illinois. Blessed with many siblings, Sid was number 14 of 16 children and has a twin brother. In fact, there were three sets of twins in the Armstrong family; two boys, two girls, and one boy, one girl. Growing up, Sidney was very involved in church; his father was a Baptist preacher.



program eventually took a fall.

Off the clock, Sid is a jack of all trades, with a passion and love for music.

Sometime ago, he was working with LaFace Records as a vocalist as well as producing and writing. He was involved in promoting the tour for Destiny's Child. In addition, he enjoys his time with the arts. Sidney does still life photography which comprises mostly of nature scenes and painting using oil and watercolor as his media.

Sweet pastries are one of Sidney's favorites; he bakes in his spare time. His mother was a Chef in London and he remembers the countless different pastries she used to bake.

While in Chicago, his primary work was in social services where he performed direct counseling in a therapeutic environment. He was contracted by the government in assisting employers help clients enter the workforce. Sid was so successful he worked with six counties in Chicago all on his own. Impressed with his efforts, his employer contracted him to Sacramento, but the

Sid is our newly appointed Resident Assistant for the Family Commons, an 81 unit building with approximately 300 residents.

A New Home for the Oasis Community Center!

The Oasis Community Center (OCC) is a "friendly place and a failsafe," remarked Darryl Wilson at the Grand Re-Opening of the OCC on October 19th. During the celebration, Mr. Wilson was one of two OCC clients that gave moving testimonials of the Center's role in helping to transform their lives. The celebration also featured remarks by Councilman

James Johnson, Carina Sass of CSULB's Center for Community Engagement, and Marisa Semense from Long Beach Community Action Partnership.

The Center was launched in 2008 through CSULB's Center for Community Engagement and has been under CVC's stewardship since late 2011 when its original HUD funding expired. Formerly located in a bungalow by the KaBOOM! Playground, the Center is now in a new home at the Sierra Building and has become "base camp" for all of CVC's community



development activities which include advocacy, resource development, and social impact evaluation. Most importantly, the Center provides critical resident services such as life skills workshops, employment services, after school programming, and case management, among others. Over the past year, hundreds of veterans, families and children have been helped and the Center has celebrated numerous client successes such as placements into permanent housing and securing work. Please come visit us soon and see how we can be of service!



EBT at US VETS Store

It's here! The US Vets store now accepts EBT cards! More convenience, more products, more of everything! Please visit the store and check out their new selections.

VVRC Community Garden Project



If you were to take a walk around the Veteran Village Recovery Center (VVRC), an on-site program operated by the Veterans Administration, you would notice a blooming garden with vibrant flowers, green vegetables, and tasty herbs. Robert "Tony" McMahon, a graduate of the VVRC program, is the person responsible for the start-up of this community garden that has brought many other veterans together.

Post-service, Tony explored many career paths, including tree-trimming and horticulture, but depression and heavy drinking eventually led Tony to seek treatment at the Tuscaloosa V.A. Medical Center. However, upon leaving, he quickly fell back into the same routines. This cycle repeated for many years until he returned to California, where he met Cynthia Ozuna, Program Coordinator for the SILS program with U.S. VETS, who opened the door for him to begin his recovery at the Long Beach V.A.

Through Cynthia, he met Carolyn, a woman in the community who donated seedlings of squash and various flowers, and rototilled a space for him to begin gardening. Not only did Tony start the garden, but he maintained it on his own throughout the entire summer, demonstrating great innovation and persistence. Tony commented, "My idea was for it to become more than just me, which is happening, and for it to hopefully be something of an involvement that is bigger than a couple people and it stays going so it doesn't turn into weeds."

Tony is now leading groups of vets from the VVRC program with help from Susan Brislin of the MOA Wellness Center and from a Home Depot Foundation Grant. Under Tony's leadership, the vets are getting therapeutic value from the teamwork and experience of participating in different projects surrounding the garden.



If our staff can do it, so can you! With California's sunny weather, 5K events are a common way for organizations to raise funds. So, get your walking shoes on and help raise funds for an organization you're passionate about! For more information about The Children's Clinic and the United Way of Greater Los Angeles, visit them on their websites at www.thechildrensclinic.org and www.unitedwayla.org.

Meet Our Staff



Cherisse Goodman

Resident Services Coordinator

Cherisse was born in Torrance, California, the daughter of two U.S. Postal Service employees. As

the oldest of three siblings and the daughter of two working parents, it became apparent that Cherisse would be tasked with the responsibility of raising her younger brother and sister at a very young age.

School was a challenge for Cherisse and boredom quickly led her to "class clown" status. By 10th grade, it became evident by one of her teachers that there was more behind Cherisse's charades. She offered Cherisse the guidance and mentoring she needed and secretly wanted. This relationship would not only mark an important turning point in her life, but also helped her discover her talent for teaching and basketball.

The day after she graduated high school, Cherisse moved from her parents' house and began working as a property manager for her grandfather while she attended college. After three years as a Chemical Engineering major, Cherisse realized this was not the path she wanted for herself. She changed her major to Communications and rediscovered her enjoyment of teaching and talent for understanding people. Unfortunately, tragedy would strike her family just before graduation. Her step-brother was diagnosed with stage IV Leukemia. Distraught, she left college and worked three jobs to assist her family.

After her brother's passing, Cherisse was left with a new found appreciation for life and a desire to help those less fortunate. At the age of 19, while working at an after-school program in Inglewood, Cherisse discovered a young girl unable to read. Much like her high-school mentor, she took the young girl under her wing and within a year her protégé was reading. It was then that teaching children became her mission. A few years later, Cherisse worked for the YMCA and then for the Boys and Girls Club in Garden Grove. She fought to include teenagers in their after-school program, and after a one year battle she had won the fight—the first teenage after-school program in the nation with the Boys and Girls Club was born.

Cherisse was first brought to our campus by Catholic Charities to run their after-school program. CVC was lucky to hire her as our new Resident Service Coordinator at the new Oasis Community Center. Drop in and say hello!

Time to Lace Up!

Did you know that 5K (kilometers) equals 3.11 miles? It's no more than a short "walk in the park"! Just ask Century Villages Property Management staff, Alesia Lumford, Leticia Banuelos, and Donna Ferraro who represented Century Villages in two recent 5K events. In October, the women joined over 1,000 walkers and runners in the 2012 Annual Beach Walk, Walk for Health, that benefited The Children's Clinic. The event raised over \$90,000 which will go towards funding the many health care services and programs that The Children's Clinic provides.

On November 17th, along with over 10,000 walkers and runners in downtown Los Angeles, our team along with a full team of residents from US Vets SILS program, participated in HOMEWALK 2012. The event raised over \$335,000 benefitting the United Way and other agencies that work with the homeless in LA County.

WORKSHOPS OASIS COMMUNITY CENTER

2112 W. Willard St. 562.388.8080.

Mondays, 10am–11:30am
HEALTHY FAMILIES

Mondays, 12:30pm–2pm
INTRODUCTION TO COMPUTERS

Tuesdays, 10am–11:30am
PERSONAL ENRICHMENT

Wednesdays, 10am–11:30am
CAREER PLANNING

Thursdays, 10am–11:30am
FINANCIAL LITERACY CLASS

Monday–Friday, 3pm–5pm
AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

Open to school aged children kinder–5th grade.
For more information call Cherisse Goodman at 562.388.8080.

FAMILY FUN

MUSEUM OF LATIN AMERICAN ART

628 Alamitos Ave. Long Beach, CA 90802.
Free admission every Sunday.

BRET HARTE LIBRARY

1595 W Willow St., Long Beach, 90810.
562.570.1044. Free homework assistance,
Tuesdays & Thursdays 2pm–7pm, Wednesdays
2pm–6pm, and Saturday 12pm–4pm.
Story times: Please call library for various hours

Saturdays

FARMERS MARKET & CENTER SPACE ADMIRAL KIDD PARK

2125 Sante Fe Ave., Long Beach 90810. Free
admission for all: Zumba, yoga, soccer for
children and adults, artist, musicians, and more.

HEALTH

Monday–Saturday
FREE HEARING TESTS

Jay's Hearing Aid Center. 3740 E 7th St.
562.433.6701.

Monday–Thursday
FREE BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING

St. Mary Medical Center. 1027 Linden, Long
Beach. 562.491.9811.

ANXIETY, DEPRESSION, STRESS, ANGER MANAGEMENT

Recovery International Burns Community Center.
5510 Clark St, Long Beach. 562.438.1048.

FREE MENTAL HEALTH WORKSHOP

Wellness Center. 1070 Atlantic Ave.
562.433.4238

SENIOR CLASSES

Wednesday, 12:30pm–2:30pm
FREE SWING DANCING CLASSES

Eldorado Park Senior Center. 7550 E. Spring St.,
Long Beach. 562.570.1771.

Mondays & Wednesdays, 11am–12:30pm
FREE ART CLASSES

2799 Temple St., Long Beach.
562.981.9500 ext 2223

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 11am–12:30pm
COOKING ON A BUDGET

Bixby Senior Center. 130 Cherry Ave, Long
Beach. 562.682.0911

HOLIDAY FUN

December 31
SOBER NEW YEAR EVE'S PARTY

Atlantic Alano Club. 1409 E 4th St. C., Long
Beach. \$10 fee.

November 17–January 6
CHILL A QUEEN MERRY EVENT

Queen Mary. 1126 Queens Hwy. 562.435.3511.
Free admission into "Village." Additional fee for
other activities.

December 22, 11am–4pm
**13TH ANNUAL BELMONT CHRISTMAS
PARADE**

Belmont Shores, 2nd St. Long Beach.
Free parade for all to enjoy.

December 4–22
**BEMBRIDGE HOUSE CHRISTMAS
OPEN HOUSE**

Bembridge House. 953 Park Circle, Long Beach.
562.493.7019. \$10.

December 20, 3–6pm
**VILLAGES AT CABRILLO
RESIDENT HOLIDAY PARTY**

Social Hall, free. Open to all residents, young
and old.

Everyone Counts

Do you want to get involved? Do you want to help make a difference in Long Beach? Then sign up to participate in the City of Long Beach's biennial Homeless Count being held on Thursday January 24th early in the morning. Working with other community volunteers, including over a dozen CVC staff members, you will be a part of the outreach efforts to the homeless community gathering information to help funding sources and to provide resources to those living without a home. Look for more information at the Property Office or the Oasis Community Center today!

We hope that the *Village Anchor* is a useful tool for telling your stories and communicating events and announcements that are of interest to you. If you have a suggestion for improving the newsletter or would like to submit a story, please call us at (562) 388-8065 or email villageanchor@centuryvillages.org.

The Village Anchor Team

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On Going Meetings—Everyone Is Welcome

TWELVE STEP, ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT (AA)	6:30am, Daily, Social Hall
WEDNESDAY NIGHT CAP (AA)	7:30pm, Wednesday, Social Hall
NEW LIFE (AA)	7:30pm, Friday, Social Hall
IT TAKES A VILLAGE (CA)	4:30pm, Saturday, Social Hall
SELF-HELP RECOVERY MEETING	6pm, Tuesday, VVRC
CHANGING SPIRITS AA MEETING	7pm, Sunday, Changing Spirits