

Easter Egg hunt a big hit for Marine families

On Thursday March 24, staff and members of the City of Costa Mesa's Military Affairs team hosted an Easter egg event for the children of the City's Adopted Marine battalion, the 1/5 Marines at Camp Pendelton.

Members of the team stuffed over 2,000 Easter eggs for the event over a three-day period at City Hall.

The Costa Mesa Community came out in full support of the Marines with over 3,000 items being donated in the steam trailer located in the City Hall lobby. Congrats to all.

CEO Leadership Award goes to CSI Supervisor Kimberlee Guluzian

At the monthly Meet and Greet ceremony, City CEO Tom Hatch awarded CMPD Crime Scene Investigation Supervisor Kimberlee Guluzian with the Leadership Award for March.

Prior to coming to Costa Mesa in 2013, Guluzian began her career in law enforcement working in the jails for the San Diego County Sheriff's Department and at the Orange County Sheriff's Department as a Forensic Specialist where she worked 10 years processing crime scenes.

Guluzian has been recognized for her leadership, initiative, positive attitude, and willingness to take responsibility for

ensuring sound crime scene investigative services are provided to the Police Department and the City of Costa Mesa.

CSI Supervisor Guluzian is known for routinely responding in the field to handle calls for service or coming in after hours for major incidents when CSI is not available. These incidents have ranged from basic theft scenes to active homicide investigations. As a supervisor, she has also addressed several operational challenges to ensure the CSI Unit remains effective.

In addition to her primary responsibilities, Guluzian instructs for the Field Evidence Technician and Crime Scene Investigator courses, the CMPD Citizens' and Teen Academies, and for new Costa Mesa officers during patrol school. She also regularly participates in other department related activities like the annual Baker to Vegas relay and OCSD academy graduations to name a few.

Guluzian's forensic expertise and skills have not been limited to law enforcement. For eight seasons, she provided her expertise as a crime scene technical advisor for the hit TV show Dexter and worked on the Oscar Pistorius case as a technical expert for the TV program Carte Blanche.

In addition, the Leadership Award, six newly hired employees were welcomed to City Hall at the event.

Basketball Legend Schea Cotton Inspires Young Athletes at Local Private School

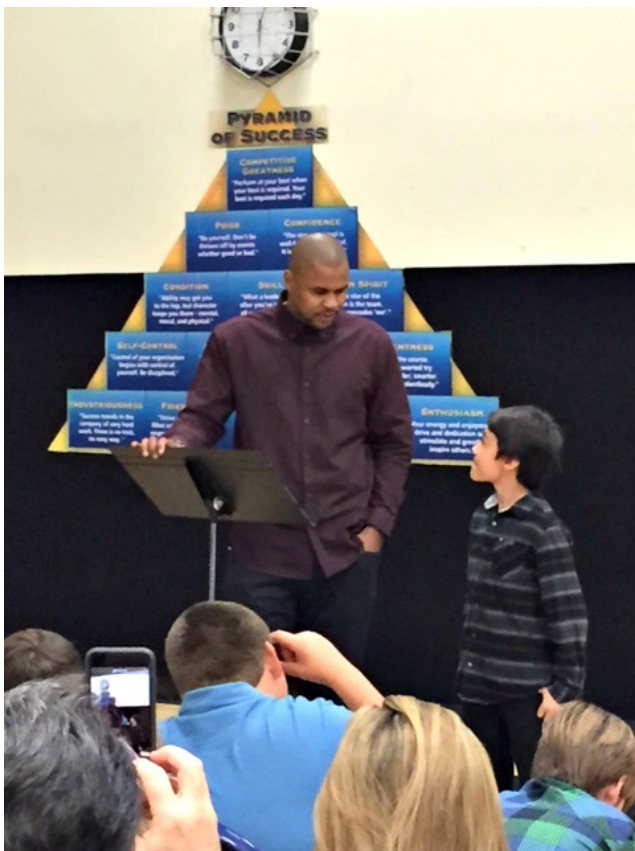
Mariners Christian School athletes had a few reasons to celebrate at their Awards Banquet on Wednesday, March 16: a strong final standing as second place in the League; new uniforms, shoes, and equipment for the entire team; and an extraordinary basketball coach in former All-Star player Schea Cotton.

A previous professional basketball player of 10 years, Schea Cotton was a champion at Mater Dei in 1994 and 1995, touted as one of America's biggest high school talents, and later played in college at Alabama. Through a series of circumstances and events, Cotton's career plans for the NBA did not come to fruition, but he is passionate about sharing his story with others and using his talent to positively impact young people.



Currently Cotton operates the Schea Cotton Basketball Academy for youth. He is also promoting a documentary called "ManChild: The Scea Cotton Story," with a goal of entering it into film festivals such as the 2016 Newport Beach Film Festival. The film explores Cotton's experience as a high profile young athlete and the pressures that come with that status. He hopes to reach young athletes as well as the entire basketball world with his message.

"MCS is extremely fortunate to have Scea Cotton's involvement in our athletic program this year. Beyond his incredible talent and experience, Scea has a strong Christian faith and attitude that is inspiring for our students," said MCS Athletic Director Mac Thompson.



In addition to his role as Head Basketball Coach, Cotton leveraged his connections with the Scea Cotton Foundation, Scea Cotton Basketball Academy, and Doctors of Newport-Mesa Audiology Balance and Ear Institute to secure 17 pairs of free Nike basketball shoes for the team, as well as new warm up t-shirts and equipment.

“It’s been a real pleasure serving as coach for the sixth graders at MCS,” Cotton said. “I felt the season was a real success in that the kids all developed, improved, and came together to play for one another and to glorify God.”

For more information on Shea Cotton and his basketball programs for youth, visit [this site](#).

Time for some Easter ‘Egg-Citement’ this Saturday

Costa Mesa real estate company Torelli Realty is proud to announce its annual Egg Hunt, “**Egg-Citement**” will take place this Saturday, March 26 from 9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Tanager Park.

Torelli Realty has sponsored this event for over 25 years and it is a highlight of the spring season for children and adults alike.

Egg-Citement offers an Egg Hunt that is broken down into age groups for the children. The first round of the egg hunt for children from 2-4 starts at 10 a.m. and each successive age group goes for 15 minutes, grabbing candy and toys, until everyone gets through. There will also be pony rides, a petting zoo with small live farm animals, coloring and jellybean contests, and a bounce house.

The Easter Bunny himself will also be present and available to take photos with all attendees.

Besides being a highly anticipated event that brings the community together, Egg-Citement also gives local schools a

chance to do some much needed fundraising. The event and attractions are free, however several local schools/organizations will be selling concessions to raise money for their programs.

[Click here to see a flier about the event.](#)

CMPD employee awards breakfast honors the difference makers

There was plenty of praise and awards to go around as several members of the Costa Mesa Police Department received top honors in the company of their family, colleagues and top city leaders at the annual Employee Recognition Breakfast held Tuesday morning March 22 at The Crossing Church.

“Today’s award recipients all share a common thread,” Chief Rob Sharpnack said. “They are servant leaders, passionately driven toward their duty and responsibility to improve the community. They are driven by a sense of what is right and good. They are the difference makers in our organization and the community.”

The event, emceed by Sgt. Clint Dieball, recognized Volunteer of the Year George Villazuela; Explorers of the Year Celia Quijivix and Kimberly Velasquez; Civilian of the Year Community Service Specialist Jessica Peters; Civilian Supervisor of the Year Administrator Sandra Lozano; Sworn Supervisor of the Year Sgt. Stephanie Selinske and Officer of the Year Lance Healey.

After winning the award, Officer Healey took to the stage and gave a rousing speech to his fellow police department colleagues.

“My entire adult life I’ve been part of an organization that is bigger than myself,” said Officer Healey, who is a military veteran and a key trainer in the department’s pre-academy program. “We are a department that is on the way up. I can see it. And I’m proud to have been a part of that.”

To read more about the award winners [click here](#).



In addition to the staff members honored, the department named Mika Community Development Corp. as the Community Partner of the Year and paid tribute to all the newly hired and promoted personnel.

Dieball commended others who didn’t receive awards but deserved special recognition, including Officer Kha Bao, who made 108 DUI arrests while on patrol, Tony Reitz, who recovered 88 stolen vehicles at a value of \$866,000, Officer Blake Clements was nominated for the Trauma Intervention

Program award in 2015 for compassionate handling of an elder abuse case and veteran Lt. Keith Davis, who recently stepped down from the SWAT team after 24 years.

Also, in a new twist, Chief Sharpnack singled out the Wozniak murder trial as the Case of the Year and honored the detectives and investigators who went “above and beyond” on what he called “one of the most complex cases in the history of the Costa Mesa Police Department.”



Sharpnack said while the police department is in a rebuilding phase today, the recruitment efforts are strong and he is working hard on a new five-year strategic plan that will outline the mission, vision and goals of the department.

“We have been galvanized as a team,” the chief said. “The future for the Costa Mesa Police Department is bright. We will solidify our position as the top of Orange County law enforcement agencies. I am truly honored to serve alongside members of the CMPD and the city organization as a whole.”

City to address School Zone Traffic Calming soon

The Costa Mesa Public Services Department will soon be initiating the construction phase of a much-needed school zone traffic calming project.

This project will target multiple locations throughout the City. The project will include replacement of all school zone warning flashers with solar powered devices and improved intelligent technology, which enables them to be activated when children are in school.

The project also includes installation of 20 radar speed feedback signs that will have built-in technology to collect speed and volume data that will allow city staff to implement future safety upgrades and enable better planning of focused enforcement in and around Costa Mesa schools.

Other improvements include installation of 220 pedestrian count down heads at various signalized intersections in the vicinity of Costa Mesa schools.

Award of a contract for this project by City Council is anticipated in April 2016. Installations would follow in Summer of 2016.

Parks and Community Services presented with prestigious award

Costa Mesa Parks and Community Services staff attended that California Park & Recreation Society (CPRS) annual conference in Long Beach to pick up a big statewide award during the closing gala.

The Costa Mesa staff was one of only seven agencies presented with an “Award of Excellence” for creating community through innovative programming.



The city won the award for its Ranch Afterschool Program, which is a collaboration with the OC Fair & Event Center and the Newport-Mesa Unified School District.

During this unique after school experience, students focus on

agricultural concepts like gardening, livestock, and leather working.

The students have a hands-on experience caring for animals on the Farm which includes: chickens, sheep, pigs, goats, llamas, cattle, and horses.

They learn responsible animal care by cleaning stalls, grooming, and exercising the animals.

Additionally, the Farm dedicates land for each student to create and maintain an individual garden. Students' gardening responsibilities include planting, watering, fertilizing, weeding, inspecting for pests and harvesting their plot.

Agricultural education helps children learn about healthy food choices and teaches them different ways to access fresh fruits and vegetables. Most importantly, students begin to understand the deep impact agriculture has in their lives past, future and present.



“This free program is a true collaboration and would not be possible without the support of the Orange County

Fairgrounds,” said Ashley Ocasio, the city’s assistant recreation supervisor. “This strategic partnership provides many Costa Mesa youth the opportunity to experience an unique after-school program, in which the focus in on agriculture and farming”

The California Park & Recreation Society awards program recognizes outstanding achievement in the areas of facility design, park planning, marketing and communication, and community improvement and programming through demonstrating the principals of resourcefulness, execution, accomplishment and alignment with the parks and recreation mission.

Estancia and TeWinkle Foundation is music to marching band’s ears

Four years ago, the band at Estancia High School was in bad shape.

The musical group had dwindled to a mere six students, the program was run by a temporary teacher and there had been quite a bit of staff turnover over the years.

Then, the Estancia TeWinkle Schools Foundation and Band and Music teacher Stacy Neacsto came marching in and things began to change.

“The Foundation helped us to provide instruments and uniforms as we were retooling the band,” said former Principal Kirk Bauermeister, now a district administrator. “There was no booster club to fund raise and we needed to give these

students and teacher hope for the future.”



Bauermeister said they asked Neacsto and the kids to dream of what the band’s potential could be and then put together a three-year plan for its future.

With the financial help of the Foundation, those dreams became reality.

“The Foundation has always enabled us to dream,” Bauermeister said. “One of the biggest hurdles is money and community support. The Foundation has always been able to provide both. So, if we could dream it and put together a solid plan, we then had a vehicle that could move that dream to a reality.”

The Foundation gives both Estancia and TeWinkle a combined \$50,000 on average each year and additional funding for programs like the band get highlighted at the Foundation’s annual gala, which this year will take place this Saturday March 19 from 6 to 11 p.m. [Click here](#) for more information about this year’s New York-themed gala, which will be held at the Avenue of the Arts Hotel (formerly Wyndham).

“Our fund-a-need raised at the gala has allowed us to give \$7,750 to TeWinkle and \$15,000 to Estancia which is in addition to the \$50,000 we give on average every year between the two schools,” said Foundation Board Member Hydee Beth.

Thanks to Foundation funding, the band has grown so big that it now fills two classrooms. And that’s not all.

At Estancia High School, foundation grants have fully funded the Apprentice Program – a new comprehensive support system for incoming freshmen and provided support for the school’s Puente program for high- achieving Hispanic students.

Foundation grants have funded the purchase of ancillary materials for mathematics, books for literature circles, smart boards, computer labs and cutting edge technology for classroom use, among other things.

At TeWinkle, foundation grants have provided up-to-date technology in nearly every classroom, including smart boards and LCD projectors. Foundation grants have also met the school’s need for extensive Social Study reference materials available for student use in the library.

Formed in 2003, the Estancia and TeWinkle Schools Foundation was made possible through a \$1 million donation from C. J. Segerstrom & Sons. For more information go to ETSFoundation.org or call 949-515-6500.

**Veterans of all stripes
attend Heroes Hall**

groundbreaking

On Wednesday morning March 16, several hundred civic, business and elected leaders, dignitaries and war veterans celebrated the groundbreaking of the new Heroes Hall veteran exhibit that have a permanent home at the OC Fair & Event Center.

“This is dedicated to the honor and sacrifices to those who served our country,” said Michele Richards, the vice president of business development for the fair and event center.



Richards was one of a number of speakers who included board members Doug La Belle and Nick Beradino and Bolton Colburn, who runs the Exhibits and Education Department at the fair and event center.

The groundbreaking duties for what will be the county’s first museum dedicated to veterans fell to those who served in wars from Afghanistan to World War II.

Those veterans included one of the last remaining Tuskegee Airmen, Robert Friend, Korean War vet Robert Dugan, Vietnam vet Frank Orzio, Desert Storm vet Douglas Wooley and Claudia Acosta of the U.S. Army.

The OC Fair & Event Center was once part of the Santa Ana Army Air base, a 1,300-plus acre training facility that was active during World War II. That base is now home to the fairgrounds, Orange Coast College, Costa Mesa High School, Davis Elementary and TeWinkle Park.

“As the former home of the Santa Ana Army Air Base, the OC Fair & Event Center is a natural fit for the Heroes Hall Exhibit. We are honored to host this historic exhibit and look forward to seeing it become a reality in the coming months,” the fair’s CEO Kathy Kramer said in a statement.

The exhibit is expected to encompass more than 12,000 square feet with indoor/outdoor exhibit space. The former “Memorial Gardens” building will be relocated and reconstructed as part of the overall exhibit, which will also include memorabilia and tributes to California veterans.

Crews are expected to break ground in March with an expected completion date of Veteran’s Day, Nov. 11, 2016. The exhibit is expected to attract more than 1.5 million visitors each year.

In 2015, the OC Fair & Event Center Board voted in favor of a \$2 million contribution to start the funding efforts for Heroes Hall.

The Board also approved the creation of the Heroes Hall Veterans Foundation to lead in fundraising for the ongoing maintenance and operation of Heroes Hall.

The city of Costa Mesa donated \$25,000 toward the project, one of many local entities who have showed their support.

To learn more about how to donate and for periodic updates on the Heroes Hall exhibit [click here](#).

Mayor's award goes to longtime education leader Kirk Bauermeister

Life-long Costa Mesa resident and Newport-Mesa educator and coach Dr. Kirk Bauermeister received the Mayor's Award at the Tuesday March 15 City Council meeting.

In his 18 year career with the Newport-Mesa Unified School District, Bauermeister is the only person to serve as principal at all four of Costa Mesa's secondary schools, TeWinkle and Costa Mesa middle schools as well as Estancia and Costa Mesa high schools.

Prior to that, he was a coach and the athletic director of Costa Mesa High School.

"This was really an easy one to pick," said Mayor Steve Mensinger, regarding his choice of Bauermeister for this award. "I've never met somebody who is more committed to what he does. He gives us all inspiration."

Bauermeister, who was accompanied by his family, said from an early age he decided to follow in his father's footsteps and

work in education.

“It’s an honor to be recognized by a city that has done so much for me,” he said.

That’s A Wrap! Senior Center Bus Gets An Artsy New Makeover

The Costa Mesa Senior Transportation Program’s bus has recently undergone a makeover. What was once a simple, traditional, white passenger bus is now a colorful piece of art that transports seniors to and from the Senior Center and to personal appointments throughout the City.

The bus has been coined as the “Costa Motion” and now bears the slogan of “Keepin’ Seniors Moving.”

The artistic design, which was created by City staff, incorporates an area for both City program advertising and Conference and Visitors Bureau advertising.

This is just another unique way to promote Costa Mesa as “the City of the Arts.”

The Happy Feet Youth Running Club Sprints Back Into Action

The free fitness program for youth called the Happy Feet Youth Running Club allows local Costa Mesa youth to learn the basics in short and long distance running while participating in fun weekly practices and an end-of-season superhero themed 5K run through beautiful Fairview Park.

The program emphasizes teamwork, goal setting and healthy habits all while having fun exercising.



Each child will receive a free Happy Feet T-shirt as well as a complimentary entrance into the Costa Mesa Community Run.

The first practice and registration day are set to take place this Saturday, March 12 at Fairview Park.