

HISTORIC

Neighborhood
of the Year Winner 2024
—NeighborhoodsUSA



To Infinity and Beyond:
**The Jennie
Tessmann Story**

Honoring our 2024
**Scholarship
Winners**

Salute to the
Class of 2024

Farewell Mr. President
Jeffrey Katz

Floral Park Celebrates Pride

June 2024

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JUNE ISSUE 2024

FLORAL PARK NEIGHBORHOOD GAZETTE

is the official publication of the
Floral Park Neighborhood Association
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Santa Ana, CA 92711-1366

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The Floral Park Neighborhood Gazette is published four times a year by the Floral Park Neighborhood Association. Our goal is to provide accurate, entertaining, enlightening and informative news of the neighborhood and to bring the community closer together through communication. Views, conclusions and opinions expressed in articles herein are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the editors, officers or policies of the Floral Park Neighborhood. The Floral Park Neighborhood Association is a 501(c)3 organization (EIN: 33-0908244) and contributions are deductible under state and federal law to the extent applicable. Consult your tax professional for advice.

2024 FPNA BOARD & COMMITTEES

The 2024-2025 board begins its term in July.

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A President's Farewell



by Jeffrey Katz

As I prepare to hand over the reins of the Floral Park Neighborhood Association to a new president this July, I find myself reflecting on the remarkable journey we've shared over the past four years. Serving as your president has been one of the greatest honors of my life, and I am profoundly grateful for the trust and support you have given me.

When I took office, we were in the midst of a global crisis—the COVID-19 pandemic. Our world had turned upside down and uncertainty loomed large. Yet, in those trying times, the creativity and resilience of our board shone through. Together, we discovered new ways to stay connected, even when we had to be apart. Virtual meetings, socially-distanced events, and a renewed commitment to looking out for one another helped us navigate the pandemic's challenges while keeping our community spirit alive and well.

Thanks to the tireless efforts of our many volunteers, we have achieved more than I ever imagined possible. Our neighborhood's recognition as a National Historic District stands as a testament to our rich heritage and collective pride. Being named a NUSA national Neighborhood of the Year winner not once, but twice—in 2022 and again in 2024—reflects the incredible dedication and hard work of everyone involved.

Our Gazette has not only informed but also united us, earning accolades for three consecutive years. We have seen record-breaking membership contributions, a true measure of your commitment to our shared goals. Through our collective generosity, we have awarded over \$100,000 in scholarships, supporting the dreams and aspirations of our young residents.

Our home & garden tours and holiday tour have showcased the beauty and charm of our neighborhood, while also fostering a sense of togetherness.

(continued on next page)

Upcoming Floral Park Events

FLORAL PARK NIGHT OUT June 26 	FREEDOM FEST June 29 	4TH OF JULY BIKE PARADE July 4 	JAZZ AT THE GEORGE JULY 28 
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For more information, go to FloralPark.com/calendar

The Most Beautiful Block awards highlight the pride we take in our community, with neighbors working hand-in-hand to create something truly special.

None of these achievements would have been possible without the dedication and passion of our volunteers. To each and every one of you who has contributed your time, energy, and talents—thank you. Your unwavering support has made all the difference.

As I step down, I am filled with a deep sense of gratitude and love for this neighborhood and our city. The experience has enriched my life in ways I could never have imagined. I am confident that the incoming 2024-2025 board will build on our successes and lead us to even greater heights. I am excited to witness the new achievements and experiences they will bring to our collective.

Thank you for allowing me the privilege of serving you. Here's to a bright and prosperous future for the Floral Park Neighborhood Association.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Jeffrey Katz

Monuments to Designate FP Historic District

We are happy to announce that work will soon begin on our entrance monuments to mark the neighborhood's designation as a national historic district.

Our entrance monuments will be cleaned and modified to show "historic district." We will also have two new monuments in the median on Flower Street. The above plaque will be mounted on a pedestal in the the



Sarah Mae Downie Herb Garden.

You can order a national historic district and/or Santa Ana historic registry plaque for your historic home. For more information, contact: Bev92706@gmail.com or visit playerschoiceweb.com.

Illegal Fireworks Bring \$1,000 Fine

As the Fourth of July approaches, we would like to remind our community that only fireworks bearing the "Safe and Sane" seal are permitted to be used within the city limits.

The use of illegal fireworks may contribute to serious injuries and fires in our community. The Santa Ana Police Department wants to remind the community that possession and/or use of illegal fireworks is a crime that can result in a minimum fine of 1,000 dollars or up to one year in jail.

"Safe and Sane" fireworks are only allowed to be used within the City limits on:

- July 1 from 12 p.m. to 10 p.m.
- July 2 & 3 from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.
- July 4 from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

To report possession or use of illegal fireworks, call the Fireworks Hotline at (714) 245-8771 or email reportfireworks@santa-ana.org

Freedom Fest Arrives June 29

It's that time again neighbors! Dust off your red, white and blue outfits and get ready for our annual Freedom Fest celebration on Saturday, June 29. This time-honored event starts at 4:00 p.m. and runs until 7:00 p.m. You can reserve your tables now at floralpark.com/freedomfest. Tables sell out fast!

The Orange County Fire Department will be on hand to judge the two best decorated tables. If not reserving a table, please bring your lawn chairs and a picnic.

In addition, The Reef Brothers will be performing classic American hits, so bring your dancing shoes! We will honor the many men and women of our armed forces and reflect on what Independence Day means for our country.

Save room for dessert as the incredibly popular cake walk is back! Much like musical chairs, contestants can purchase tickets to be a part of the fun game. You are the lucky winner if you land on the magic number when the music stops. Winners pick out their favorite baked good. Bakers and non-bakers alike can sign up to donate baked goods at floralpark.com/freedomfest. Last year we had over 40 baked goods donated.

For the children, there will be face painting and a watermelon eating contest. And what's Freedom Fest without ice cream provided by Kevin Shuler and beverages donated by Sandy DeAngelis? This event is a reminder of why we are so lucky to live in this historic neighborhood surrounded by friends and family that love celebrating our freedom and friendships. For more, go to Floralpark.com/freedomfest.



There's No Place Like Home in OC's Most Inclusive Neighborhood

Take a drive through the Floral Park Historic District and you're bound to see a number of gay PRIDE

flags, not just during PRIDE month, but all year long. And there's a good reason for that. It has long been be-

lieved that Floral Park has the largest concentration of LGBTQ+ residents, not just in Santa Ana, but in

all of Orange County. While there is no definitive figure for the gay and lesbian population in Floral Park, few question the claim.

“As LGBTQ+ communities have become more visible in many American cities since the 1960s, gay people have often chosen to live in affordable neighborhoods with architecturally significant housing stock, which they preserve in an effort to maintain their historical merit and raise local home values,” according to The American Planning Association. And that is certainly the story of Floral Park.

While Floral Park was the most coveted neighborhood in Orange County during the 1920s and 1930s, it had entered into a state of decline by the 1970s. Downtown Santa Ana became overwhelmingly blighted with deteriorating buildings and the city was experiencing a period of rising gang violence. In 1976, Santa Ana had the highest crime rate of any major city in the state. As elderly Floral Park residents passed, new families were reluctant to move in, preferring newer, safer neighborhoods to the south. Floral Park instituted a home tour in the 1980s as a way of attracting attention to the beauty and architecture of the neighborhood to both attract new residents who value historic architecture and to inspire current residents to invest in their homes. Word got out and slowly preservation and restoration followed.

“For many years, a perplexing phenomenon has made its way into real estate markets across the country: where there is a high concentration of same-sex couples, real estate tends to be more expensive and appreciate in value faster,” says Ralph McLaughlin, a housing economist at the real estate website Trulia. McLaughlin studied the prices



Lou Pecora and Joe Banger, Floral Park's OGs (original groundbreakers)

and price appreciation of homes in neighborhoods with a high concentration of married same-sex couples, both among male and female pairs. He found home prices increased on average 23% in zip codes with high concentrations same-sex couples.

In his book *A Passion to Preserve: Gay Men as Keepers of Culture*, author Will Fellow observes “a lot of gay men really do have a sense of good design, a good aesthetic sense. Whether or not it’s politically correct, I believe that stereotype is the truth,” Fellow wrote. “Seeing the potential of old buildings to be attractive, gays are not afraid to go into marginal areas and fix them up.”

According to a report published by the real-estate website Zillow, buyers looking to purchase properties in so-called “gayborhoods” should now expect to pay a premium. The American Community Survey defines gayborhoods as areas with a high share of same-sex couple households. According to Zillow, home values tend to be higher in gay inclusive neighbor-

hoods as gay couples tend to have fewer children than heterosexual couples, which leaves them with a larger disposable income. Having less children also gives them greater flexibility to move to areas where the quality of local schools and kid-friendliness are less important. Instead, they look for places that are safe, welcoming and financially viable.

Economists have long speculated about the effects of gayborhoods on everything from diversity to gentrification. One common theme of this analysis is that neighborhoods with a higher than average density of gay residents are by definition more diverse and open-minded, with a wider range of racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups as well. Another common argument is that gays often pioneer the revitalization of disadvantaged, crime-filled urban neighborhoods and their presence can be seen as an early marker of gentrification and a precursor to a jump in housing prices.

In their article “*Uncovering the Relationship Between Historic Districts and Same-Sex Households*” authors Kelly L. Kinahan and Matthew H. Ruther found that tracts with higher shares of gay households are more likely to establish locally designated historic districts. And certainly, that was the case in Floral Park which became a National Historic District last year.

Lou Pecora and his partner Joe Banger may have been the first gay couple to see the potential of Floral Park. They purchased their first home on Santa Clara in the 1950s while Lou taught at Golden West College and Joe taught interior design. Soon they were buying more. At their height, they owned approximately 20 homes in the neighborhood, saving them from being destroyed architecturally and/or



Jacob Turrietta with his moms Sarah & Tracie on Heliotrope Drive.



Peter and Evan Jackson with their son Ace on Heliotrope Drive.

Frank Patti, who lives with his husband Craig Kalthoff-Patti on North Park Boulevard, agrees. “Floral Park is filled with friendly, open-minded and affirming families from various communities. My husband and I have felt the love and acceptance in this community that is rare in other parts of the county, state and country” said Patti. “Floral Park reminds me of the line from *The Wizard Of Oz*, ‘there’s no place like home.’ And we are proud to call Floral Park our home.”

There truly is no place like Floral Park. The Floral Park Neighborhood Association once sponsored a booth at the Orange County Gay PRIDE Festival specifically to attract LGBTQ+ residents to the neighborhood. Two years ago it introduced its own neighborhood version of the PRIDE flag, which is flown all year long throughout the neighborhood. Along with West Floral Park and Fisher Park, the neighborhood holds quarterly LGBTQ+ mixers. And the neighborhood association has repeatedly supported Santa Ana’s LGBTQ Center OC, which is the second oldest such center in America.

Community inclusion means more than being tolerant and allowing individuals to participate in our community. It means empowering, encouraging, and creating

aesthetically. They were well accepted in the community at a time when those suspected of being gay were often ostracized from their families, communities and even their jobs. Times have certainly changed since then and Lou talks about his life in the neighborhood with pride, appreciative of the love and openness he has always experienced here.

And he’s not alone. “As the mother of a gay child, I was searching for a community where my child would feel safe, not an easy thing in conservative Orange County,” said one resident. “We ended up driving through Floral Park and I was impressed by the number of pride flags all throughout the neighborhood and knew that this was a place where we would be accepted, that this was home.”

“Floral Park is certainly the most welcoming and inclusive neighborhood in all of Orange County,” said Kevin Shuler, a realtor who lives with his husband, Brian, and two sons on Heliotrope Drive. “For those looking for a diverse neighborhood that is accepting and loving, then Floral Park is the place.”

That’s exactly how Sara and Tracie Turrietta feel. “We were living in Yorba Linda, which is not exactly accepting toward gay families” said

Sara. “People were outright unkind and hurtful and we knew we had to move.” Sara and Tracie found a vintage home in Floral Park on Zillow, and while that house didn’t work out, they fell in love with the neighborhood and eventually moved into another home on Heliotrope Drive.

“Here, our son, who is also gay, is welcome to be whoever he is,” said Sara. “I remember going to our first neighborhood mixer thinking ‘wow I’ve never seen so many gay people all in one place in OC in my life,’” she joked. “But it’s not just that, it’s also the allies who love us and are here for us. We couldn’t have asked for more! It feels like home and that’s the only way to describe it.”



L to R: Spouses Carlos Dias & Jarred Hobbins on Bonnie Brae; and Mona Konstan and her wife Jill Brumett (19th Street) with her brother Jeffrey Brumett and his partner Marc LaFont (Heliotrope Drive).

Neighborhood Night Out Goes To The Birdcage Lounge, Wednesday, June 26



by Eric Finley
photograph by Matt Fitt

Join us for a vibrant and unforgettable evening on Wednesday, June 26 at 7:30 pm as we celebrate LGBTQ+ Pride Month in the historic spirit of Floral Park! This year's Neighborhood Night Out will be a dazzling event featuring captivating drag entertainment, vintage-inspired cocktails, and an atmosphere filled with pride and joy.

We warmly welcome ALL members of the community to join us in this celebration of love and unity.

The theme for the evening is "Roaring Rainbows & Vintage Glamour" so dress to impress with your most fabulous wigs, rainbow accents, and vintage attire. Embrace the glitz and glam of the Prohibition era while cel-

ebrating the colorful diversity of our neighborhood.

Event highlights include:

- **WELCOME COCKTAIL:** Sip on a vintage-inspired cocktail upon arrival.
- **AMPLE HORS D'OEUVRES:** Enjoy an array of generous finger foods, artfully prepared by downtown Santa Ana's award-winning Perla Mexican Cuisine.
- **DRAG ENTERTAINMENT:** Be entertained by our charismatic drag host, performing a few delightful songs that will add sparkle to the night.

Secure your tickets now for an evening of fun, flavor, and fabulousness. Tickets to Neighborhood Night at the Birdcage Lounge in Costa Mesa are \$40 per person. Only a limited amount of tickets are available, so snag yours at FloralPark.com/calendar.

opportunities for individuals to live full, rich and authentic lives. Over a period of one hundred years, Floral Park has grown from a "restricted community" in the 1920s to Orange County's most inclusive neighborhood, a supportive community where residents embrace all people irrespective of race, gender, age, disability or sexual orientation.

"Together, we strive to build a legacy where neighbors experience inclusion, meaningful connection, and true joy in their everyday life," said Floral Park Neighborhood Association president Jeffrey Katz. "Community inclusion allows purpose and meaningful contributions to thrive. This is what we stand for in the Floral Park Historic District." And that's certainly something to show pride in!

What is Pride?



by Jeffrey Katz

Pride is a celebration of people coming together in love and friendship, to show how far LGBTQ+ rights have come and how in some places there's still work to be done. Pride month is about acceptance, equality, and celebrating the work of LGBTQ+ people and the community.

Pride is the opposite of shame. Throughout history, LGBTQ+ people have had to live their lives in the shadows for fear of harassment,

discrimination, prosecution and even physical violence. Pride month was founded in a protest for civil rights and a fight for visibility. It traces its roots back to the 1969 Stonewall riots. The first Pride marches started the following year to commemorate the multi-day riots and eventually evolved into a full month of LGBTQ+ pride.

The original Pride flag was designed during the AIDS epidemic after the assassination of gay San Francisco City Supervisor Harvey Milk in 1978. Much has changed since those turbulent times, but as the saying goes, “the more things change, the more they stay the same.” The ACLU is currently tracking 515 anti-LGBTQ+ bills in the US legislature. Flying a PRIDE flag shows support for equal rights and inclusion.

LGBTQ+ young people are more than four times as likely to attempt suicide than their peers. A 2023 national survey by The Trevor Project found that 41% of LGBTQ+ young people seriously considered attempting suicide in the past year. They went on to add that LGBTQ+ young people are not inherently prone to suicide risk because of their sexual orientation or gender identity but rather placed at higher risk because of how they are mistreated and stigmatized in society.

“Having a visibly supportive and inclusive community is important for young people struggling with their identity,” added Dr. Frank Patti, a gender affirming psychotherapist. “When you display flags and other visual symbols of support, it’s a way of saying, ‘Hey, we see you, we’re with you, we celebrate you, you matter to us, you’re not alone,’ and that’s really an important way of sending signals to young people that help them feel accepted, safe and included.”

Non-gay allies are some of the most effective and powerful voices for LGBTQ+ people. An ally can be defined as someone who stands up for the equal and fair treatment of people different than themselves. Given that LGBTQ+ people do not make up a majority of the population, allies are critical in creating a welcoming and inclusive neighborhood.

By being an ally, and showing support, you help end ignorance leading to issues and actions that adversely impact the daily lives and livelihoods of LGBTQ+ people. Not only do allies help foster safety in the coming-out process, they also help others understand the importance of equality, fairness, acceptance, and mutual respect. It has been asserted that the majority of pride flags in Historic Floral Park are flown by allies.

There are many versions of the Pride flag and Floral Park has designed its own to show support for equality and inclusivity. The 3’x5’ nylon flag is printed on both sides. The colors represent the wide diversity within the community. The flags are available for \$35 at floralkpark.com/shop.

In addition, Kevin Shuler is distributing smaller 19”x12” flags that can be placed in lawns for free. To get your, contact Kevin at kevinshuler@gmail.com.



Kevin Shuler is offering free 12”x19” pride flags to the neighborhood.



4th of July Parade Returns

Everyone loves a parade! And we’re having one the morning of July 4. This is our second time having a neighborhood Independence Day Parade but this time it’s expanding. The Historic Floral Park Neighborhood’s 4th of July Parade isn’t just for bikes any more! Come with your wagons, scooters, pets, golf carts or just walk the route!

You’ll want to line up at the corner of Bonnie Brae and Benton Way at 8:45 a.m. because the parade begins promptly at 9:00 a.m. The route is a single loop going north on Benton to Riverside Drive, turning west to North Park, then back to Bonnie Brae. Everyone’s invited! Watching the parade? Bring your folding chairs and enjoy the show!

There’ll be \$25 gift cards for the most patriotic, the most creative and the best dressed pet! Afterwards, join us for pancakes and pastries. We invite you to bring breakfast items to share afterwards.

To Infinity and Beyond: THE JENNIE LASBY STORY



S

by Dylan Almendral

Science is like a canopy of stars in the night sky, this massive blanket of ideas, concepts and subjects, the universe that we all live in. This is most likely the way Jennie Lasby-Tessmann saw the world.

Jennie Belle Lasby was born on August 23, 1882 in Castle Rock, Minnesota. She attended Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota,

an institution well known for its astronomy department and received her bachelor's degree in science in 1904. This led to Jennie being the recipient of an assistantship at Mt. Holyoke University where she received her master's degree in astronomy in 1908.

Jennie joined her parents in the move to Santa Ana in search of fairer climate and arrived at Mt. Wilson observatory in Pasadena, Califor-

nia in the fall of 1906. There, she became the first female scientist to work as a research assistant and worked alongside Dr. George E. Hale and Albert Einstein as well as other luminaries in the physics and astronomy fields. Lasby's first task was to assist Adams in obtaining the sun's radial velocity to better understand how the sun rotated. She was the only woman employee at Mt. Wilson who was an

official member of the American Astronomical Society. While at Mt. Wilson, she regularly published articles about her studies in spectroscopy and solar observation. In 1911, she co-wrote a study with Dr Hale theorizing the rotation of the sun as well as another study with the future director of the observatory, Walter Adams. While at Mt. Wilson, she was known as a “computer,” not unlike the NASA women featured in the film *Hidden Figures*. (A computer was originally a human clerk who completed calculations, i.e., one who computes. In the 1920s, the devices used to perform the tasks of the human computers were known as “computing machines.”)

In 1914, Jennie was invited to travel to Potsdam, Germany by noted scientist J.C. Kapteyn in order to conduct spectroscopic work, which involved studying how a visible wavelength of light is dispersed through a prism. Today, spectroscopy involves studying the interaction between matter and electromagnetic radiation. With the break out of WWI, Jennie had to move her operations to the United Kingdom where she spent several months in 1915. She returned to the United States later that year and worked as a research assistant at her alma mater, Carleton College in Minnesota. She would later become a teacher there to fill the space of a male staff who had answered the call to war.

In 1918, the war’s end brought Jennie back to Southern California where she lived with her parents in Santa Ana. By 1919 she became a teacher at the four-year-old Santa Ana Junior College on the campus of Santa Ana High School where she taught astronomy and history. In 1923, she became the technical advisor and driving force behind the only private observatory in Orange

County named the Bishop Observatory (for owner Clyde Bishop, a Santa Ana attorney). Located in Lemon Heights, it was equipped with an eight-inch Alvin Clark refractor, was motor driven and top of the line! Jennie was able to bring students to the observatory to teach them the newest in spectroscopy.



“Astronomy, as it is understood and applied today, affects all other branches of learning - philosophy, religion, physics, chemistry - through it, all phases of human thinking have been revolutionized.”
—Jennie Lasby

In the 1930s (after Bishop’s death in October of 1927), the observatory was bequeathed to Santa Ana Junior College.

Jennie continued to teach astronomy and history at Santa Ana Junior College for 27 years from 1919 to 1946. Thousands of young minds passed through her class doors. A

number of her students became so enthralled with the subjects that some constructed their own telescopes. She regularly brought her students to Mount Wilson’s 60-inch reflector for tours. Lasby married Heinrich Arnold Johannes Tessman in 1929 and continued to teach at Santa Ana College until her retirement in 1946.

The Tessman Planetarium at Santa Ana College is named after Lasby, and the house where she lived in Floral Park is registered as a historic property. While also being a prominent educator, Jennie Lasby was a highly regarded civic figure in Santa Ana and greater Orange County where she gave many presentations on various subjects.

In 1940, with WWII on the horizon, Jennie was sent to Washington, D.C. as a representative of the women of Orange County to appear at a summit on America’s role in the conflict. In 1942 she was the first woman, along with two friends from Santa Ana, to traverse the Alaska Highway. Lasby was as intrepid as she was educated.

Tessmann lived at 2462 North Riverside Drive from 1940 until her death in 1959. During those years, she hosted numerous meetings and lectures as well as the book club and poetry sections of the Santa Ana Ebell Club.

Tessmann Planetarium at Santa Ana College is named in her honor and serves a marker of her career and love of teaching. Jennie Tessmann was a woman pioneer in so many ways, a woman of Santa Ana, a woman of the world, and leaves a truly lasting legacy towards women in science. *“She has shown us worlds beyond our own realm, and therefore has helped us reach for greater understanding.”—Words of dedication in the 1946 Santa Ana Junior College Del Año.*

FPNA Awards \$30,000 in Scholarships



by Julie Humphreys

The FPNA sponsorship committee is pleased to announce the awarding of scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 each to 30 graduating high school seniors in Santa Ana. The sponsorship committee reviewed, analyzed, and rated 72 applications from 11 Santa Ana high schools and one from Santa Ana College. The awards ceremony was held on May 19 at the home of Sandy DeAngelis and Ed Trotter, attended by FPNA neighbors, scholarship recipients and their families and school counselors.

The FPNA scholarships are not based on academic achievement or financial need. Instead, the applications are judged based upon the students' community service, how their most meaningful volunteer experience impacted their lives (essay), as well as school activities and the number of community service hours.

Due to the success of the home tour, home tour gala, wine & beer

garden, and the generous support of FPNA residents, FPNA is thrilled to impact the lives of more students than ever before.

2024 RECIPIENTS

NATALEY LEONOR Santa Ana Valley High School

As an officer for Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA club), Nataley has organized beach cleanups, hygiene drives and clothing drives. Through her service work with United Falcons, HOSA Club, and Link Crew, Nataley has learned the value of advocating for others and witnessed the positive changes her community service has brought to others, which has instilled a commitment to making a difference through volunteer actions. She hopes to continue her education and major in political science.

JAZMIN RODRIGUEZ Santa Ana Valley High School

In addition to being the girls volleyball varsity captain, CIF athlete

and defensive MVP, and devoting over 300+ hours as team manager and assistant coach to the boys volleyball program, as well as participating in a number of other school activities (Nicholas Academic Center, UCI Life Vest Program, "Banking on our Youth"), Jazmin volunteered on the school's Link Crew to aid "at-risk" incoming freshmen. Tutoring and guiding her mentees during their critical transition to high school also served as a stepping-stone for Jazmin's own personal growth, fostering a passion for helping others. She plans to attend either Notre Dame or Berkeley and study economics/financial management.

DESTINY DIAZ Santa Ana Valley High School

Destiny has channeled the struggles her family experienced with a relative's past incarceration into her volunteer activities to advocate for others who are similarly affected. Through her service with Dignity & Power NOW, Destiny helps screen and connect former inmates to attorneys to provide expungement services to help them rebuild their lives with a clean record. This volunteer work, along with her other community service through United Falcons, Community Voices for Wellness, and church activities have instilled a commitment to helping others. She plans to major in political science and pursue a law degree.

MIA GONZALEZ Santa Ana High School

In addition to devoting significant hours as Key Club President, and to the Park Santiago Neighborhood

Association, Mia's experience volunteering for the Vietnamese Rainbow of Orange County (VROC) annual "Hot Person Summer" event (which provides free haircuts, gender-affirming clothes, accessories, healthcare resources, food, and entertainment) has been particularly rewarding. Through Mia's leadership and organizing activities at this event, Mia has witnessed (and helped provide) support for the LGBTQ+ community, which, in turn, has provided a meaningful step in a journey of self-acceptance by giving Mia the courage and pride to advocate for self-identity and the community of which Mia is part. Mia hopes to major in biology and sociology as an undergrad and attend medical school.

MANUEL RUELAS
Santa Ana High School

The nurturing and guidance provided by his grandmother instilled in Manuel gratitude and a willingness to help others. His volunteer activities with the Chicano Mentoring Association included participation in many drives, including Thanksgiving, Back-to-School, and holiday drives, helping feed and support others in need. Additionally, Manuel volunteered over 300+ hours photographing and editing school events and sporting activities to demonstrate support for his school community. Manuel plans to attend a 4-year university and major in mechanical engineering.

ALESSANDRA HUIZAR
Santa Ana High School

Alessandra has over 2,000 hours of community service (Santa Ana High School ambassador, SAHS boys soccer team manager, Welcoming Hands Club, etc.). Through her participation and eventual presidency of the Welcoming Hands Club, she has over-

seen event planning, managed collaboration, and allocated budgets to implement the club's mission to create a supportive environment for students with disabilities by fostering inclusivity, addressing issues of isolation and exclusion, and advocating for those in need. She plans to attend Cal State University Long Beach and obtain a master's degree in English and art education.

BRIANNA CERNA
Santa Ana High School

Brianna has engaged in a variety of volunteer efforts, including Santa Ana Streets Club (President), Nicholas Academic Center, Latino Health Access, Key Club to name a few. But her volunteer services teaching children at her local church was most rewarding, providing guidance and positive leadership during weekly lessons. Brianna would like to eventually obtain a master's degree in biological sciences/political science/biomedical engineering.

SADIRA WONG
OC School of the Arts

Sadira has also dedicated a significant number of hours toward community service and volunteerism, including Girl Scouts, Ethan and Coco's Book Club, MaxLove Project, and the California Scholarship Federation. Her participation in fundraising for the Ethan and Choco's Book Club (through organizing a 5K run to raise funds for "Read-Think-Thrive boxes" at CHOC hospital) was impactful in demonstrating the power of both individual and community support toward a common goal and has inspired her continued work with organizations dedicated to promoting education. Sadira plans to attend a 4-year university and study film production.

ALEX WOLFF
Ed Trotter Honarium
OC School of the Arts

Alex has used his interest and technical skills in film making to volunteer significant time on film crews (in various roles a director, cinematographer, sound engineer, set designer, editor, producer, and actor) for others in the larger student film communities, including Chapman UCLA, and OCSA summer school, which are dependent on other skilled volunteers to complete their projects. He was also director and editor for short video public service Announcement for local non-profit, Bicycle Tree. Through this service, Alex has not only gained practical knowledge and built connections via real-life cinematic experience, but his teamwork helps contribute to the creation of others' artistic vision. Alex would like to pursue a film major at Chapman University.

ALEX ROTHENBERG
OC School of the Arts

Alex has volunteered significant hours in his local school community (including ARTSPARKS counselor organizing activities for autistic students, welcome week committee, California Scholarship Federation, and the Integrated Arts Leadership program). He also served as a student leader for California School of the Arts summer camp where he applied his organizational and motivational skills (and considerable patience) to successfully audition, direct and produce two plays with the young campers. Alex was able to overcome personal fear and self-doubt to inspire others in the process, learning a valuable lesson in perseverance and real-time problem solving. Alex wants to double major in music composition and business in college.

SAUL MIGUEL
Middle College

Saul has volunteered for Team Streets, Santa Ana College (tours) and the HB Apostolic Center. However, his most meaningful volunteer service was through Wizards for Water which partnered with Team World Vision to train for and run a half marathon to raise funds for water for children in Africa. Saul simultaneously trained and raised funds with his teammates for weeks, crossed the finish line at the OC Marathon after 13 arduous miles and raised \$4,000 for clean water for 80 children. Saul plans to attend a four-year university and major in chemistry/pre-pharmacy.

Ruth Garcia
Middle College High School

Ruth has also volunteered for a variety of worthy causes (including Laura's House, Samaritan's First, Heroes Elementary School, Be the Change community service project, and as a teacher's assistant), but her internship at Mitchell Child Development Center was most impactful. Having previously attended Mitchell Elementary, she was pleased to give back to current preschoolers with special needs. She was able to observe not only teachers with differing teaching styles, but students with differing learning styles and adapt her approach to meet the needs of her mentees, acquiring increased patience, confidence, and conflict resolution skills along the way. Ruth plans to attend a four-year university and study psychology and psychodermatology.

MELISSA CASTILLO
Middle College High School

Melissa has volunteered for Big Brothers Big Sisters and the Santa Ana Elks Lodge among others, but her community service efforts to boost flagging enrollment at Middle

College High School has had the most impact. She conceived, managed, and led of team of classmates to give on-campus tours for students from seven elementary schools over two months to increase incoming student enrollment, impacting the school's history and strengthening Melissa's leadership skills in the process. She wants to obtain a business administration degree and pursue a marketing communications career with the NFL or NBA.

LESLIE TOVAR-RODRIGUEZ
Middle College High School

In addition to many school activities (Saturday Law School Academy, GSA Club, Ladies First, Pre-Med Club, NHS, Nicholas Academic Center, etc.), Leslie has volunteered several hundred hours at the Southwest Community Center assisting with food drives, holiday giveaways, hot meals and rental assistance. Her sustained after-school tutoring has not only provided valuable direct assistance to at-risk students, affords relief to hardworking parents with little energy or time to assist, and offers tangible opportunities for the students to dream and succeed with the help of community support. Leslie would like to attend a four-year university and major in biomedical engineering.

KIMBERLY RINCON
Middle College High School
Joseph Bangor Award

Kimberly has engaged in many school activities (including GSA, Art Club, Ladies First, Stationery Club and Crocheting/Knitting Club), and has also volunteered for Planned Parenthood. However, her significant number of volunteer hours at Southwest Community Center has had the most impact. In addition to the satisfaction of tutoring young students who reminded her of her younger self, she assisted

with data management and was able to use her artistic skills to create posters and flyers for SWCC events to promote engagement/participation and communicate with participants and sponsors, gaining empathy and self-confidence. Kimberly would like to attend university and study art.

KELIA LOPEZ
Middle College High School

Kelia has also engaged in many school activities (including NHS, Bring About Hope, Gay-Straight Alliance) and has volunteered for Laura's House, AVID, and Helpful Hands, but her considerable hours of service as a judge for speech and debate has been most rewarding. She hosts workshops, coaches and mentors younger students on developing topics and speeches, and judging competitions throughout Santa Ana, Fullerton and West Covina and during SAUSD summer camp, helping others find their voice and hone their advocacy, but gaining valuable self-improvement, teaching and mediation skills of her own as well. Kelia would like to major in psychology and eventually become a clinical psychologist.

KATHIE GARCIA
Middle College High School

Kathie participates in the Health Career Collaborative, Bring About Hope, Soccer Scholars, and her basketball team to name a few. She has volunteered over 455 hours with St. Margaret's Episcopal School/Church where she has grown as a leader in her community. She works with the youth in her Church, specifically with children with disabilities. This has informed her view of the world and given her meaningful ways to encourage and serve this population with her time and talents. She wants to attend

university, participate in a study abroad program, and attend medical school.

KATHERINE ALDERETE

Middle College High School

Katherine is involved with many activities such as The Coding School, Stanford program for Inspiring the Next Generation of Women in Physics, Nicolas Academic Centers, Art Club, and Girls Who Code. She volunteers with America on Track, NHA, The Energy Coalition, and Free Methodist Church. Her time as a mentor with America on Track has connected her with 4th-6th grade students. Within this context, she seeks to build connections as a positive role model. She has seen the struggles of many children in our city and hopes to bring change through community, connection, and education. She will pursue a BA and MA in computer science and has so far been accepted into UC Berkeley.

JOSIE ZUNIGA

Middle College High School

Josie is a leader with Team Streets community clean-ups. She participates in Femineers (females in STEM), National Honors Society, ASB assembly planner and host, and Ladies First to name a few. Team Streets is the student-led community clean-up initiative that gave Josie a new perspective on health, teamwork, and community building. She is a leader with the group and leads teams to parks and neighborhoods. She says that the homeless and gangs in the area have come to respect their work and they have also been recognized by the city park maintenance workers at Santiago Park who they now collaborate with on cleanings and trash bag disposal. Josie wants to study ab-

normal psychology in clinical and forensic settings and perhaps pursue a career in psychiatry.

JOCELINE VALADEZ

Middle College High School

Joceline is vice president for Ladies First Club, the Gay Straight Alliance, National Honors Society, and AVID tutoring. She volunteers in many areas but her most significant experience has come with her involvement in Ladies First Club, where she led events for Domestic Violence Awareness Month on her campus. They educated fellow students through presentations and discussions while collaborating with local nonprofits such as Laura's House. She also helped with a school-wide household item drive to donate needed essentials to Laura's House. Her future goal is to become a high school English teacher.

ARACELY ITURBIDE

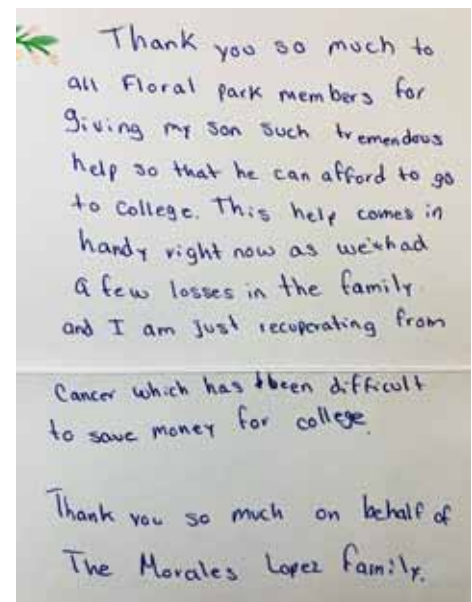
Middle College High School

Aracely is involved in Ladies First Club, Bring About Hope Club, Knits and Stitches, and volunteers at Thomas House Shelter, Republic Services, Oak View Library, and Engage 360 as a tutor and supervisor. The Homework Club gave her many opportunities to help students who needed a quiet place to do their work. Aracely saw the challenges these students face to get their work done, such as troubled home environments. This propelled Aracely's interest in counseling and psychology. She plans to attend Santa Ana College and get her AA in psychology and work as a student counselor.

ANDREW MORALES

Middle College High School

Andrew is involved with AVID and has been involved as a volunteer with Catholic Charities and



a leader with Team Streets. What first began as a smaller project for AVID became a widespread student-led initiative that creates community clean-up projects at parks and neighborhoods all over Santa Ana. Many students have been a part of these clean up events and they also work to educate the public on the importance of this type of neighborhood maintenance and care. Andrew would like to attend Cal Poly Pomona and work towards a degree in electrical engineering.

ALAN RIVERA

Middle College High School

Alan is involved with America on Track Emerging Leaders while participating in many activities like Musicians Unite, Competitive Edge, OC United Way mentorship, and Banda La Prestigiosa. He initiated the first Musicians Unite Club at his school and has found his enthusiasm for teaching music. He has found creative ways to showcase student talent through lunch-time performances for the whole school. Alan's goal is to obtain a BA in business administration with a focus on financing from Chapman University.

MIA BRUHL**Godinez High School**

Mia is involved with Cheer/STUNT at Godinez, Operation School Bell, and volunteers at the Aquarium of the Pacific (126 hours). She works as a volunteer guest interpreter at the Aquarium which has enhanced her confidence and her sense of community as she works alongside many roles such as guests and paid staff. She has been accepted to the University of Oregon where she plans to attend in the fall and pursue her interest in neuroscience.

LANA NGUYEN**Godinez High School**

Lana has volunteered her time with Hoag Hospital (84 hours), Aquarium of the Pacific (294 hours) and the Discovery Science Center (65 hours). She is involved with UCI Empower STEM mentorship, Young Congressional Leaders Program, and Guitar Club president to name a few. Lana found her most meaningful work in the educational department of the Aquarium of the Pacific. She works closely with paid staff and assists with presentations to guests in exhibits such as the shark and stingray habitats and has gained confidence and made meaningful connections with staff, children and guests. She plans to attend university with a medical career path in pediatric neurology.

JOSUE LUIS**Godinez High School****Athey Family Honorarium**

Josue has completed 80 hours of volunteer service with Big Brothers Big Sisters of America while being involved with cross country, track and field, and Key Club. He was matched with a first grader with Big Brothers Big Sisters of America which showed him the value of presence and consistency

within the context of a mentoring relationship. He experienced how impactful this program can be and would like to continue this type of work in the future. Josue would like to major in kinesiology and pursue a master's to work as a prosthetist and help people with physical disabilities.

PAULO MENDOZA NAVA**Godinez High School**

Paulo is the leader of the Art Club at his school and volunteers with Latino Health Access as well as working since 2022 as an assistant coach and umpire with North East Santa Ana Little League (NESALL) for six hours a week. His most meaningful work was with NESALL when he saw that his little brother's coach needed additional help. His patience and love of teaching have been a huge asset to the team, and he has had the pleasure of watching them win the little league championship. He plans on attending UCLA to major in computer engineering.

DANIEL ARROYO**Century High School**

Daniel is an athlete in cross country and track and field while being involved with KidWorks, AVID tutoring, and Century HS early college. While tutoring with AVID, Daniel found his self confidence in working with people his own age in a mentorship capacity. He became a go-to peer for struggling students and developed meaningful connections beyond the classroom. For college he intends on studying biology or bioengineering while continuing in track and field and cross country.

CRISTIAN GARCIA**Century High School**

Cristian invests his time with KidWorks, Key Club, TEACH

Academy, and Early College Club to name a few. His tutoring strengths include engaging the more difficult students with creativity and friendly competition. He has seen these students improve and participate more in the classroom and has found this work to be personally rewarding. He is interested in several fields including immigration law and education.

BADRIYAH SANN**Century High School**

Badriyah has been involved in many school activities such as Key Club, Early College Club, Early Academic Outreach Program, and the Beall Scholar Program. Badriyah's most meaningful volunteer experience was with the Key Club at a holiday drive at a local food pantry where they served over 800 families. Badriyah initiated the service day and forged some meaningful permanent connections with the staff at the food pantry where they continue to volunteer regularly. Badriyah is interested in pursuing studies in neuroscience and Alzheimer's research.

Over the years, Floral Park Neighborhood Association has given tens of thousands of dollars worth of scholarships to Santa Ana residents who attend a Santa Ana high school or college. Each student selected has volunteered their time, skills, muscle, and heart to helping others in the community. We have been very fortunate to be able to fund these awards through money generated by home tour ticket sales, our very popular wine and beer garden, our home tour gala, and the generosity of private donors. Please consider a tax-deductible donation of any amount to help our scholarship campaign for 2025. Together we're making a difference in the lives of friends, neighbors and young people in Santa Ana. Please give generously at floralpark.com/scholarship-fund.

2024 Home & Garden Tour Reaches Record Attendance



by Denise Silva

Long before moving to Floral Park, I have been taking delight in the annual home and garden tour. As a Mother’s Day gift, it was tradition for my mother, sister and sometimes Aunt Elvira to take the tour together. We loved the quaintness of the neighborhood and looked forward to seeing the inside of the lovely old homes. We have watched it grow into the fabulous event that it is today in its 31st year. Although, it somehow seems to keep that small town feel.

Mom is 91 years old now and no longer attends the tour. However, she still looks forward to seeing photos with all the enhancements of the event and perusing the Home Tour booklet. The time-honored tradition looks different now that I live in Floral Park and am on the home and garden tour committee. I see it with a new perspective and

a different focus.

Working with the committee has been fantastic. It is a group of skilled and creative neighbors with years of commitment to the success of the tour. Many of the team members have been on the committee for well over five years. However, new members are encouraged to join. Always looking to improve, the committee decided to go digital this year with check in and ticket sales the day of the event, which was successfully, spearheaded by Jess Carr, Charles Graeber and Julie Humphreys.

Speaking of ticket sales, this year we sold more tickets earlier and overall. With nearly 1,800 tickets sold as opposed to roughly 1,700 in 2023, in addition to other home tour activities, we generated over \$49,000 specifically for scholarships and charities. It was the first time we have advertised in a local newspaper. Brochures were

out earlier and replenished often at the respective businesses where they were displayed. Sponsorship ads continue to cover the expense of printing the home tour booklet and add to the overall revenue.

The Street of Treasures continues to surpass expectation as its progress builds on the year prior. Richard Silva takes great pains to keep the vendors coming back and finding new ones to keep the experience of perusing the market fresh and enjoyable for our guests.

Each year the lineup of food vendors changes based on the previous year’s comments from attendees. Allyson Thompson took the food fare offering to a whole other level this year, creating a savory variety to meet most everyone’s palate. With the extension of the wine and beer garden area, there was plenty of space to relax and enjoy one’s lunch with a beverage of choice and group of friends.



Once again, the car show did not disappoint. In fact, it was fantastic. John Richmond and Richard Terrones have fostered a congenial atmosphere of devoted antique car enthusiasts with a collection that is unrivaled.

We say goodbye to Alex Hart who has been skillfully managing the docent team of nearly 450 volunteers for the last two years. We thank him and wish him well as he joins the scholarship/charity committee.

We were overwhelmed with the most consistent feedback on the surveys from attendees stating, "This was the best tour yet." Folks seemed to like the way the path of homes on tour were spaced (this is always the luck of the draw), the expansion of the wine and beer garden and the food options. The best compliment came in a text I received today from a college friend who attended the tour with me. Her maid of honor, Renee, was coincidentally at the tour as well. Renee,

and her sisters were so enamored of the event and neighborhood that she is actively looking for a home to purchase here in Floral Park!

Bravo home and garden tour team and especially Sandy DeAngelis and Beverly Schauwecker who have been at it for 31 years!

To view a gallery of photos by Johnny B. Hicks from this year's home & garden tour, go to floralpark.com/gallery or use the QR code to the right.



Old Hollywood Magic Created at Home Tour Gala



by Wayne Suraci

Wow! No other words can come close to what I thought on the night of our 2024 Home Tour Gala.

For the first time, we decided on a theme and it was a magical Hollywood event. Arriving guests strolled down our own Walk of Stars before promenading up a red carpet to the Silva's stately residence on Victoria Drive where they had pictures taken flanked by two life size Oscar statues.

From there they proceeded through the residence into what can only be described as a magical Floral Park backyard, where they were greeted by a friendly committee member and a glass of champagne.

Our evening commenced with an auction area beneath a vine covered canopy, where our star attendees could view and bid on the silent auction items specially curated by Denise Silva and Duane Greenleaf. All the while they enjoyed their beverage of choice, tasting the passed hors d'oeuvres, viewing the classic car (Eric Finley's Duchess) and sampling from the largest and creative charcuterie board (Mila Payne) I have ever seen.

In addition to the wide variety of premium wines (hand selected by our Floral Park sommelier, Richard Payne), we had two specialty cocktails as well as almost any preference of alcohol.

The evening was hosted by De-

nise and Mike Silva who graciously opened their home and yard for this very important event. Not only did they allow us to enjoy their beautiful abode, but were instrumental in planning, organizing and engaging our guests.

Earlier, I referred to the night as magical, not because it was Hollywood themed, but because of the fantastic job that our 2024 committee did to ensure its success. When I first walked into the yard, I was transported into a glamorous garden that was full of delightful surprises and touches. The lighting that draped the walls, the unique centerpieces that adorned every table, the music that filled the air, the incredible auction area and above all the

friendly waiting staff (Colette's Catering) that always had a smile on their face.

Food and drink were rich in appearance, variety and taste as any attendee will tell you. Our evening was guided by our home-grown master of ceremonies, AP Harreld who really got the frenzy going during the live auction portion. We were able to raise a new record amount, in part to his lighthearted bantering and ability to ramp up the energy.

The sweet spot of the evening was shared by two individuals. First, by Jonnie Reinhart, who swooned us with his Sinatra-like vocals and stage swank. He was exactly what we were looking for when we started the talent search and he delivered. The second individual turned out to be our unsung hero. A person who embodied the spirit of what the event's purpose was. She is someone who was unknown to almost everyone in attendance. She was our Judy from the Wizard of Oz. Her name is Cinthia Ochoa, and she was the recipient of one of our scholarship awards. Cinthia not only charmed us with her story, her smile, and her personality, but she put a face on the main reason for the event. Her story enlightened us as to the challenges faced by youth in pursuit of advanced education. We are grateful for her sharing this, and to help us remember what our original intent was in awarding scholarships.

Our biggest stars of the evening however were the guests who came out (almost 200) to really make this a Floral Park event. In parting we gave you a chocolate Oscar, but that only symbolized how appreciative we are, for sharing the magic with us. We were honored.

Stay tuned for information on our next gala. We guarantee that it will also be an event to remember.



Beautification REPORT

What makes Floral Park beautiful? The Volunteers do! The exits, entrances, and Sarah Mae Downie/Butterfly are planted and maintained by many, happy volunteers. They say that pictures are worth a thousand words, so...



Lina Lopez, our designer and the one who purchases all our plants, with Denise and Brian Byrd. The committee of volunteers keeps the entrances and exits looking their absolute best.



Some of our Wonderful Wednesday Weed Whackers in the park moving mountains: Cindy Lee, Brian Byrd, Kay Palmer, Lina Lopez, Chris Switzer, Di Willis, Lisa Sorenson and Kathy Pierson.



The Wednesday Weed Whackers planting and weeding, of course: Kay Palmer, Chris Switzer, Lisa Sorenson, Beth Hoffman, Kathy Pierson, Lina Lopez and Kathy Pierson.



Volunteers on a weekend planting on 19th and Victoria: Obed Garcia, Joe Rodriguez, Jason Stillwell, Lisa Sorenson, Lina Lopez, Kay Palmer, Kevin Islas, Chris Switzer, Brian Byrd, Denise Byrd, Cindy Lee.

The beautification committee is also responsible for “tree reforestation” and Debbie Wolfenbarger, our lead for the project, is pictured giving West Coast Arborists a check from Floral Park to 24 new trees that were planted before the home tour.

We started the Curb Appeal Project to thank neighbors for improving their yards and we have big plans for more projects coming soon! If you care to join the committee, please contact beautification@floralpark.com



Reflections on the 4th of July in Floral Park

by Erica Miller

“Nostalgia—It’s delicate, but potent...it’s a twinge in your heart far more powerful than memory alone - a feeling of a place where we ache to go again.” —Don Draper
Mad Men

Mr. Draper, thank you for your eloquence, but can I add, for some of us, sometimes it’s a twinge in your heart for a place you’ve only heard of and hope is real.

The 2022 Floral Park 4th of July Celebration was our first Floral Park event, before we’d even moved into the neighborhood. Maybe you, like me, remember how Michelle Mangione’s band conjured Stevie Nicks and Janis Joplin, roared them to life in a bandstand right there on Heliotrope. Or Jeff Katz embodying JFK’s quote.

Maybe it just felt right to place your hand over your heart with an army of neighbors and pledge something you believe in. My kids say they remember the cake walk, the ice cream truck, playing with friends...I’m glad, because I think that also means they felt safe, free, happy.

They might need to remember that someday. I think, I hope, among other things, someday their hands will remember the way over their hearts. In any case, it was a good day for the whole family - so good we moved onto North Park a month later.

Fast forward to July 4, 2023



when my kids woke up to Grandma coming over to help them decorate their bikes for the kids 4th of July parade over on Bonnie Brae. Half our family would spend the day with neighbors and family - lighting sparklers, licking popsicles, wiping barbecue sauce from fingers, lazy from the pool and sun.

The other half would spend the day a mile away, under the fluorescent lights of the CHOC emergency room; the next week, in various stages of recovery after an emergency neurosurgery. Our three-year-old has no memory of neighbors and grandma and the bikes, or the pool, or sticky fingers, or sparklers - she was asleep, as the surgeon biopsied and resected her massive spinal cord tumor.

Soon it’ll be July 4, 2024. Her hair will be a little shorter, almost

shoulder length, mostly covering the scar on her neck. She’ll still have a little “bump,” as she calls it, on her chest, where her chemo will go in once a week, most weeks, until October. Other than that, she will be miraculously, phenomenally, every inch a normal four-year-old girl. She and her sister will wear matching Stars and Stripes outfits, and her brothers will show her how to hold a sparkler, and she will lick popsicles next to her best friend Ruby on Bonnie Brae. Her dad and I will tap on our hands over our hearts to show her where hers goes, and together we will all pledge that some things in the world are still true and right and good.

Older neighborhoods carry a resonance, half-sung melodies of memory and significance. The ones I hear, here, make me want to stay.

A Heartfelt Memorial Day Tribute in Floral Park

Under the clear skies of May 27, the Floral Park community gathered for a profoundly moving Memorial Day ceremony at the freedom bell on 19th & Heliotrope. This year, the ceremony reached new heights, touching hearts and minds with tributes that beautifully honored the memory of our fallen soldiers.

For the first time, country singers graced our Memorial Day stage, dedicating their songs to soldiers and their families. Katelyn Marie opened the ceremony with an evocative rendition of *“Travelin’ Soldier”* by The Chicks, setting a poignant tone that resonated with everyone present.

A familiar face, Riverview neighbor Oscar Garibay, delighted us for the third consecutive year with his trumpet performance. As the majestic notes of John Williams’ *“Summon the Heroes”* filled the air, we were transported to hallowed battlefields, where love of country filled our soldiers with the courage to face unimaginable trials.

The ceremony saw the return of the OC Deputy Sheriff Bagpipe Band and the SAPD Honor Guard, who brought their solemn dignity to the event. Adding a touch of historical flair, young neighbors Dylan and Beckett Ryan, dressed as Yankee Doodle and George Washington, led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Jeffrey Katz, the driving force behind this event, asked us to reflect on the enduring symbol of our nation: the American flag. He reminded us that this flag, which once led soldiers onto the battlefield, now flies high as a beacon of hope, unity, and liberty.

Neighbor and SAPD Chaplain Heather Riley delivered a deeply



Neighbors Dylan and Beckett Ryan pose with the AOCDS Pipe Band on Memorial Day.



moving invocation, followed by a performance from the Santa Ana High School Orchestra. Their rendition of William Hofeldt’s *“In the Company of Angels”* carried our thoughts to those who now walk in the heavens in the company of angels.

Mayor Amezcua and Congressman Correa delivered stirring speeches, emphasizing the day’s significance. Mark Rothenberg introduced the reading of W.H. Auden’s *“If I Could Tell You,”* a poignant reminder that even in uncertainty, there is beauty, and even in sorrow, there is hope.

Caroline Donnelly then took the stage to introduce JT Harker’s performance of Tim McGraw’s *“If You’re Reading This.”* She reminded us of the silent grief carried by the widows of war, those silent sentinels of loss who bear the weight of a world irrevocably altered.

The Floral Park String Ensem-

ble's performance of Samuel Barber's "Adagio for Strings" resonated deeply with the audience, many recalling its haunting presence in the movie "Platoon," which depicts war as a psychological and physical hell. The piece set the stage for the ceremony's emotional highlights.

The All American Boys Choir delivered a stirring rendition of "Requiem" from the "Band of Brothers" series. The young soloist's voice, combined with the harmonies of the 35-member choir, left not a dry eye in the audience.

In a touching tribute reminiscent of the funeral of John F. Kennedy, Sergeant Blake of the SAPD led a Riderless Horse ceremony. As the riderless horse passed by, the children of Floral Park gathered around Jeff, stood at attention, and saluted, emulating the famous salute of John Jr. at his father's funeral.

Katelyn Marie closed the ceremony with "Godspeed," another Chicks song that has become a tradition at the funerals of young soldiers who leave behind children. The ceremony left many neighbors expressing their pride in living in a community that values such heartfelt tributes.

Our deepest gratitude goes to Jeff, who spent hundreds of hours over the last five months organizing this remarkable program. The entire ceremony can be watched on YouTube, a testament to the dedication and love that went into creating such a memorable event.

As we look back on this Memorial Day, we are reminded of the sacrifices made by our soldiers and the importance of honoring their memory. Floral Park once again showed its true spirit, coming together in unity and reverence to pay tribute to our heroes.



Photography by Gina Chiaramonte (gwchiaramonte@gmail.com)
For more photos, go to Floralpark.com/gallery



Honoring Our Graduates: A Salute to the Class of 2024

by Jeffrey Katz

In every journey, there are milestones that mark our progress and remind us of the path we've traveled. This June, Floral Park stands proud, celebrating the remarkable achievements of our 8th graders, high school seniors, college graduates, and those who have earned their master's degrees. These bright minds, filled with dreams and determination, have crossed significant thresholds, each diploma a testament to their hard work and the unwavering support of their families and community. We honor these remarkable neighbors.

8TH GRADE GRADUATES

Jillian Pierson
(Riverside Drive)

Jillian graduated from Holy Family Catholic School. Next fall, Jillian will be attending Mater Dei where she was accepted with distinction.

Naomi McKinney
(Heliotrope Drive)

Naomi graduated from Holy Family Catholic School. Naomi was a member of the Gold Honor Roll. Her essay earned her the Knights of Columbus Essay Winner. Naomi was bestowed with the American Legion Award, the Award for Excellence in Science and the President's Award for Excellence. This fall, Naomi will be attending Foothill High School in Tustin.

Emmett & Gavin Romero-Pham
(Heliotrope Drive.)

Gavin and Emmett graduated from Santiago Charter Middle School, the



Jillian Pierson



Naomi McKinney



Emmett & Gavin Romero-Pham



Isabella Marie Zar

first charter school in Orange County. Their time there was marked by active participation in various activities, notably playing for the Varsity Basketball team and immersing themselves in video production classes. Come fall, they'll transition to Foothill High School, where they're eagerly looking forward to engaging in football and basketball summer camps. Emmett thrives on creativity, while Gavin finds joy in basketball and exploring the depths of history through reading.

Isabella Marie Zar
(Greenleaf Street)

Isabella began attending Holy Family Catholic School in kindergarten. She achieved Blue Honor Roll during her 8th grade year and was a member of the girls' basketball team, earning the Coach's Award this past season. Isabella was also a cantor for the Holy Family student body Masses. Isabella will be attending Rosary Academy and plans to participate in golf, basketball and mock trial.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

Alexander Chiarini Gallagher
(Heliotrope Drive)

In the halls of Legacy Magnet Academy, one student shone brighter than the rest. Alex, with a stellar 4.55 GPA, didn't just excel academically; he practically swept the awards table at graduation, earning 13 out of 14 honors including prestigious accolades like the Seal of Biliteracy, the Seal of Civic Engagement, and The Golden State Seal. But Alex wasn't just a star in the classroom; he was also the driving force behind the Tustin High

School Varsity water polo team, leading them as captain. Now, as he prepares to spread his wings and reach for the stars, Alex has set his sights on the University of California Berkeley, where he'll be diving into the fascinating world of Astrophysics. With his drive, intellect, and determination, there's no doubt that Alex is destined for greatness, ready to make waves both in the classroom and beyond.

Daniella Kagasoff
(*Heliotrope Drive*)

After completing her education at Mater Dei, Daniella emerges as a standout student leader. Throughout her high school journey, she took on various roles, including serving as Freshman and Sophomore Treasurer, and eventually as the President of the Junior Class. Daniella's commitment to civic engagement was further evident through her participation in the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State program. However, her most notable achievement lies in her dedication to community service, totaling over 400 hours. One of Daniella's projects was even highlighted in the March 2024 edition of *The Gazette* (on page 11). Looking ahead, Daniella is set to embark on her academic journey at Michigan University next year.

Alex Rothenberg
(*Ross Street*)

Alex graduated from the Orange County School of the Arts (OCSA) with a remarkable 4.5 GPA, showcasing a blend of academic excellence and diverse achievements. Among his notable accomplishments, he attained Level 8 of the Associated Board of the Royal School of Music for piano performance and earned conservatory honors for instrumental music at OCSA. Further highlighting his musical talent, he secured acceptance and scholarships to participate



Alexander Chiarini Gallagher



Daniella Kagasoff



Alex Rothenberg



Alex Wolf



Anthony Chiamonte

in the prestigious University of Florida and Florida State University piano summer institutes. Additionally, Alex contributed synthesizer tracks to a commercial album, showcasing his versatility in music production.

Beyond his musical pursuits, Alex demonstrated a deep commitment to social issues. He served as an intern for Stand With Us, an organization dedicated to advocacy and education on social justice matters. Furthermore, he devoted his time to counseling at Artsparks, a nonprofit camp for children, and organized educational discussions on Holocaust awareness at OCSA. Alex's multifaceted engagement reflects his passion for both the arts and social responsibility. This fall, Alex will be studying Music Composition and Business at the University of Florida.

Alex Wolff

(*Greenleaf Street*)

Alex graduated from Orange County School of the Arts (OCSA) Film and Television Conservatory with honors and a biliteracy seal. He is a 2024 OC Register Artist of the Year Semi-Finalist, 2023 New York High School Film Festival Finalist, 2023 OCSA Best Director, Best Picture, Best Documentary, Best TV Project, 2024 FPNA Trotter/DeAngelis Scholarship Recipient. He will continue to work in the film industry and owns Alex Wolff Film Productions at www.alex-wolffcreate.com.

COLLEGE GRADUATES

Anthony Chiamonte

(*Greenleaf Street*)

Anthony graduated from Westcliff Univ. where he received a bachelors in business administration. Anthony pitched for the Warriors' baseball team. He will be going into the Secret Service in criminal investigation.

Olivia Matas
(Ross Street)

Olivia graduated from Chapman College where she majored in sociology. We featured Olivia in the February 2021 issue of *The Gazette* (page 13) when she was crowned Miss Orange County. She will be pursuing a master's degree next year.



Olivia Matas

Jillian Miller
(Ross Street)

A recent graduate of Occidental College, Jillian majored in biology and minored in public health, balancing the rigors of academia with her role as captain of the water polo team. Now, Jillian embarks on a new journey as a medical assistant while she prepares for physician's assistant school.



Jillian Miller

David Nissin II
(Heliotrope Drive)

David graduated from the University of California, Irvine where he majored in chemistry. David was a member of the UCI Chamber Singers, the flagship ensemble of UCI's choral program. With a degree in hand, David will be pursuing a position in the pharmaceutical industry.



David Nissin II

MASTER'S DEGREES

Mckenna Nissin
(Heliotrope Drive)

After her undergraduate classes at NYU, McKenna obtained her Master's of Science from Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health. She will be pursuing her medical degree.



Mckenna Nissin

Leah Schmidt
(Flower Street)

Leah graduated from Emerson College with a Master's of Science in communication disorders. She is currently completing a clinical fellowship in speech-language pathology at Rancho Los Amigos Rehab Hospital as an inpatient speech therapist.



Leah Schmidt

Silent Film Screens Under The Stars



Silent films were all the rage in the 1920s when North Broadway Park was being developed. But when Allison Honer created Floral Park in 1930, there was a dramatic shift towards talkies. That's the storyline of *"The Artist,"* a silent film starring Jean Dujardin, Bérénice Bejo, James Cromwell, Penelope Ann Miller and John Goodman. The film garnered ten Academy Award nominations and went on to win five awards, including Best Picture, Best Director and Best Actor.

The film will be screened under the giant cedar tree at the corner of 19th Street and Heliotrope Drive on Saturday, August 10 at 8:00 pm. Bring your folding chairs and popcorn and return with us to Hollywood's golden era of silent cinema.



Homes With Curb Appeal Applauded

The beautification committee group is continuing with the “Home of the Month - I’ve Got Curb Appeal” program. Over 30 addresses were identified when we did our first drive around last year. Each month, two homes are pulled randomly from the “bucket” representing both south and north of Santa Clara. It may take years to acknowledge all of the efforts by our homeowners making Floral Park the most beautiful place to live!

Any one of the following criteria is used for curb appeal appreciation recognition:

- Constant maintenance and upkeep
- Actively done something different
- Provided a new focal point
- A yard refresh

We will be doing another drive around soon to continue adding more addresses....your home could be next! Thank you for all of your efforts!

March Homes of the Month

2031 North Ross Street
2405 Bonnie Brae Street

April Homes of the Month

2104 Greenleaf Street
2310 North Park Boulevard

May Homes of the Month

2120 Heliotrope Drive
2369 Riverside Drive

June Home of the Month

2220 Heliotrope Drive



2031 North Ross Street



2405 Bonnie Brae Street



2104 Greenleaf Street



2310 North Park Boulevard



2120 North Heliotrope Drive



2369 Riverside Drive



2220 North Heliotrope Drive

Floral Park's Most Beautiful Yard



Early in April the City of Santa Ana announced its 36th annual Most Beautiful Yard program, created to recognize Santa Ana residents who have improved the exterior and landscaping of their homes. The neighborhood associations are asked to submit three nominations taking into consideration the maintenance, landscaping and overall general appearance of the home and property. A committee from “Santa Ana Neighborhood Initiatives” then reviews each nomination to make the final decision on the winner.

We are so happy to announce that this year’s MBY award for FP goes to Armando Varela at 2442 Heliotrope. The committee loved the whimsical nature of the property along with the beautiful floral and hedge design. Armando said that the news made his day. And he wanted to honor Karen’s memory and her inspiration for their MBY. There will be an awards celebration at the Bowers Museum later this month. Congratulations Armando!

Lina and Matthew Lopez at 2045 Greenleaf and Wayne Suraci and Meryl Craig at 1924 Ross were also nominated this year.

Summer in Santa Ana

Free, Fun, Family Things
to do Around Town



There are numerous great, free activities for families throughout Santa Ana all summer long. For links to these events and more, visit FloralPark.com/calendar.

Juneteenth

June 22, 1:00 - 5:00 pm

Centennial Park

3000 W. Edinger, Santa Ana

Family picnic with live entertainment, food and more.

1776 Movie Screening

Saturday, June 29, 4:00 - 6:00 pm

Frida Cinema

305 E. 4th Street, Santa Ana

4K ultra HD screening of the American musical.

Celebration of India

Sunday, July 14, 11:00 am - 3:00 pm

Bowers Museum

2002 North Main Street

Sitar music, techno music, art projects, facepainting, food and more.

Movies in the Zoo

Friday, July 26, 6:00 pm

Santa Ana Zoo

1801 E Chestnut Ave, Santa Ana

Free screening of Disney's Tarzan with themed activities.

Shakespeare in the Park

Wednesday, July 31, 7:00 pm

Birch Park, 210 N Birch Street

Live performance of Shakespeare's Henry IV. Bring chairs.

Jazz & Blues Festival

Sunday, Aug. 4, 11:00 am - 3:00 pm

Bowers Museum

2002 North Main Street

The OC Boys and Party of Three to perform. Dancing, food, art, etc.

Chicano Heritage Festival

Saturday, August 11, 2:00-7:00 pm

Centennial Park

3000 W. Edinger, Santa Ana

Celebration of the independence of several Latin American countries.

From the Director of Communications

Dear Gazette Reader and fellow Floral Parkians,

It is with great regret that I tell you this will be my last issue as communications director. It's been a great couple of years! I'm not leaving (we still live here and love this neighborhood). But I have a full-time career and for many reasons my very hectic job is going into overdrive over the next couple of years. And while the Gazette is a spectacular newsletter of which I am proud to be a part, the gig is, in many ways, a full time effort on its own.

Thank you one and all for reading this treasured publication. A special shout-out to Marc LaFont for his layout and design genius and for FPNA president Jeff Katz for always going above and beyond providing content.

I look forward to "seeing you around the hood"!

Warmest regards,

Trace Weatherford

Trace Weatherford

JAZZ at the GEORGE

Free Neighborhood Concert • Sunday, July 28, 6:30 pm

Whether they were written by the Sherman Brothers, Alan Menken, Elton John or Peggy Lee, songs from Disney movies have become a part of the fabric of our lives and our memories. Now, Matt Johnson and The New Jet Set give these songs swing as they perform their jazz versions of classic Disney songs at Jazz at the George, (at the historic George House at 2028 Victoria Drive in Floral Park). So pack up your lawn chairs, summer snacks & beverages, and come enjoy some cool jazz on a hot summer eve. Attendance is free (sponsored by Patrick Johnson & Denise Ryan and Floral Park Arts & Culture).



Brushstrokes of Unity: The Mural That's Revitalizing a Community

by Stephanie Miles

If you've taken a stroll down Main and 20th street recently, you might have noticed a burst of color gracing the northern-facing wall of El Pollo Loco. It's a new mural, a collaborative effort by local artists Stephanie Miles, a Floral Park resident, and Tony Gomez. Their canvas? A wall that's seen its fair share of wear and tear from decades of graffiti and layers of peeling paint. But this project isn't just about adding a splash of beauty to the neighborhood; it's about revitalizing a community.

The story behind this mural



stretches back further than just a paintbrush and a wall. The Santa Ana Triangle has long faced challenges—crime, housing issues, gang activity, and homelessness among them. In 2022, Jeffrey Katz decided to shine a spotlight on this area. He started by rallying residents and local nonprofits in the Santa Ana Triangle Initiative. He then launched SMBA (Seventeenth & Main Business Alliance), uniting local businesses to tackle the neighborhood's myriad issues.

One of Jeff's initiatives was a "Mayor's Walk," where Mayor Valerie Amezcua joined forces with law enforcement, commu-

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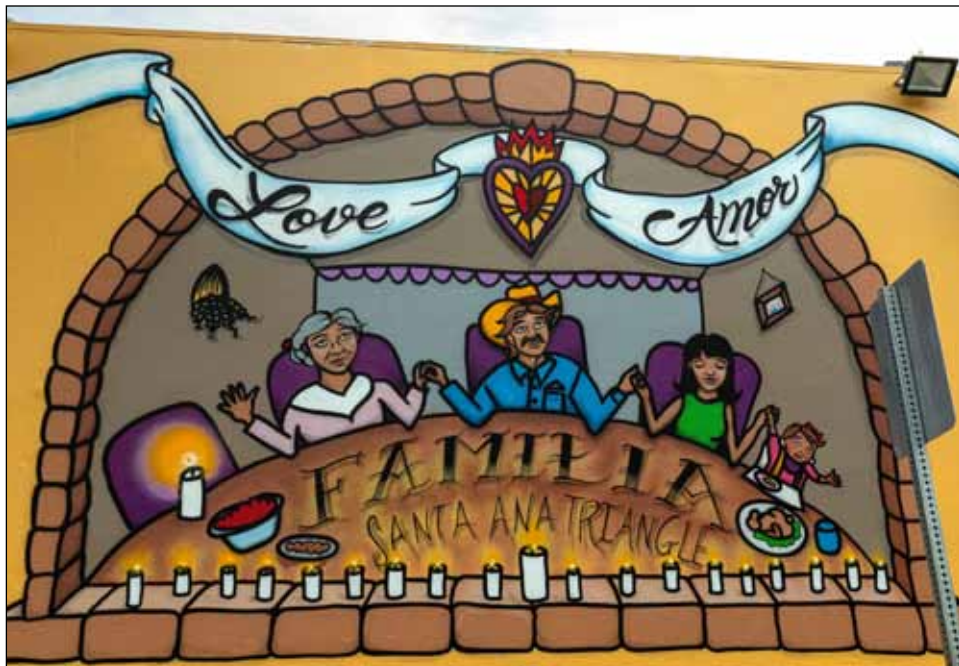
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munity leaders, and families for a show of unity. And now, thanks to these efforts, the El Pollo Loco parking lot has transformed into a safe haven for the community, hosting everything from family movie nights to soccer outreaches.

For the Amaya family, who have owned this El Pollo Loco since 1984, the changes are particularly meaningful. Their eatery holds a special place in Orange County history—it was the first of its kind in the county and the second nationwide, after Los Angeles.

But the mural isn't just about adding color; it's about adding heart. Stephanie and Tony designed it with the neighborhood's youth in mind, filling it with vibrant hues and playful scenes. A welcoming blue door beckons viewers into a warm family gathering, where hands are clasped in



prayer. An empty seat at the table, illuminated by a glowing candle, prompts reflection on absent loved ones and potential new additions to the community.

In the end, the Santa Ana Tri-

angle Neighborhood isn't just a place—it's a testament to the strength of families coming together. It's a reminder that in this community, everyone is welcomed, known, and celebrated.

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Farewell Mr. President: A Tribute to Jeffrey Katz

by Trace Weatherford

In the grand narrative of neighborhood life, there are those whose contributions stand out. Jeffrey Katz, the outgoing president of the FPNA, is undeniably one of those luminaries. His four-year tenure at the helm has been nothing short of transformative, marked by a blend of hard work, creativity, and an unwavering vision for what our community could become. As we bid farewell to this neighborhood trailblazer, *The Gazette* pauses to reflect on his remarkable achievements and the indelible imprint he leaves behind.

Gazette Impact

Jeff has been a prolific writer in the neighborhood *Gazette* writing more than 50 articles during his tenure. He recruited neighborhood writers and developed relationships with OCSCA and Santa Ana High School to give their creative writing students an opportunity. Jeff always boasted that the best article written during his four years was by an African American student at OCSA who wrote about the architect Paul Revere Williams in *The Gazette's* Black Heritage Month issue (*February 2021*).

Jeff was responsible for a variety of *Gazette* series such as the Valentine love stories series, the graduation articles and the year in reviews. Jeff's "From the Presi-



dent" columns were rarely a report about past neighborhood events, but rather pieces that inspired us to be better neighbors.

Jeff was not content with Floral Park being an island unto itself. He recognized that true community extends beyond neighborhood boundaries and sought to bridge the gap between Floral Park and the rest of Santa Ana. From the cultural richness of Bowers Museum to the academic excellence of Santa Ana High School and Santa Ana College, Jeff's writ-

ing served as a conduit, connecting our neighborhood with the wider fabric of our city. One of Jeff's most celebrated columns was the "What's Going Up" series, which detailed new construction projects sprouting across Santa Ana. Jeff aimed to ignite excitement about the city's growth by urging residents to see beyond the confines of Floral Park.

If you were to ask Jeff for his favorite article, he would no doubt point to his February 2021 article, "The Road to Kindness." Jeff believes that the kindness among neighbors exhibited in Floral Park was the antidote to what ails Santa Ana.

Neighborhood Transformation

Jeff single-handedly organized numerous patriotic events, each one planned to honor the sacrifices of

our nation's heroes. From four Memorial Day ceremonies to three Veteran's Day tributes, and four Freedom Fest flag ceremonies, Jeff left no stone unturned in his quest to foster a sense of pride and respect for our nation's values.

These events were more than just ceremonies; they were opportunities to educate and inspire. And despite the often gentle nudge from his wife Suzee to "wrap it up, Honey!", Jeff seized every moment to convey the significance of our

flag and the sacrifice of our soldiers. He believes deeply that instilling a sense of patriotism in Floral Park is paramount, that love of country is a rare and precious thing in today's America.

One of Jeff's most notable achievements was the closure of the alley between Flower and Olive Streets. This alley had been a source of frustration for years, with neighbors repeatedly attempting to close it without success.

He also succeeded in getting a new historic light installed on Santa Clara, just east of Heliotrope, a particularly dark area that had been the scene of a tragic auto accident. This new light enhanced the beauty of the area while significantly improving safety.

Then there was the Broadway fence project. North Park neighbor Wally McCloud had been trying for 11 years to get a fence installed to prevent homeless individuals from darting into the neighborhood and causing deterioration of the trees. Jeff listened to Wally's concerns and took immediate action. "I spoke with Jeff, and he was very willing to look into this project" Wally noted. "The impact of the fence on this part of Floral Park has been dramatic."

And then, there was the unfortunate condition of a neighbor's home on Greenleaf. For 20 years, the property had been in disrepair, causing concern among residents. When a group of neighbors approached Jeff for help, he organized a team who worked in shifts over three successive weekends to bring the property into code compliance.

In the Spring of 2022, Jeff persuaded the neighbors on 18th Street to commit to improving the aesthetics of this section of the neighborhood. With an FPNA grant and a number of neighborhood volunteers, Jeff led the initiative. In the end, the

City awarded them "The Most Beautiful Block" award for their efforts.

Cultural Impact

In addition to his landmark projects, Jeffrey Katz's tenure as president left an indelible mark on Floral Park with a cascade of cultural and artistic events. His orchestration of the Pacific Symphony's unforgettable 2022 performance brought the echoes of classical music right to our doorstep. The success of this event was just the prelude to an enriching 2023 Arts & Culture series, featuring a spectrum of performances from a piano recital to the lively rhythms of two jazz concerts.

Jeff's commitment to the arts extended beyond music. He welcomed poets whose words resonated with our community's spirit. The Harvest Moon Festival celebrated the local Vietnamese heritage under the autumn sky, while the Menorah lightings brought a warm, inclusive glow to our winter nights.

His curation of the Arts in the Parks Adirondack chair exhibition showcased the talents of Santa Ana artists, turning our neighborhood into an open-air gallery which invited everyone to experience the beauty of local creativity.

Jeff incorporated into each board meeting time for the directors to share news about neighbors who were living in a challenging time. Julie Humphreys, who served on the board with Jeff, reflects on Jeff's tenure: "A few things stand out about Jeff's leadership on the board these past two years: he was instrumental in creating a 'Care & Compassion Committee' to offer comfort and aid & emotional support for neighbors who have suffered a loss, injury or, on the flip side, those with more positive life changes, such as a new baby. I think this undergirds our sense of community and neighborli-

ness beyond the merely social".

Under his leadership, Jeff worked tirelessly with the homeless population, transforming what was once a dire encampment around the county building into a space of hope and dignity. He significantly reduced the number of individuals struggling at the shopping center and Yoshinoya's strip center. Jeff's approach was always one of empathy and action, ensuring that these vulnerable members of our community were given the support and resources they needed.

But perhaps one of Jeffrey's most enduring legacies will be the creation of the 17th & Main Business Alliance (SMBA). This collaborative initiative is bringing together local businesses, stakeholders, and community members to address pressing issues and foster growth within the intersecting corridors of 17th and Main Street.

Neighborhood of the Year

Jeff's tenure has been marked by many accolades. Floral Park has twice been named a national Neighborhood of the Year winner, first in 2022 and again in 2024. And let's not forget the Gazette has been honored as one of the best neighborhood newsletters in the nation.

So, while we bid farewell to Jeffrey Katz, the Historic Floral Park Neighborhood Association president, we continue to be thankful for Jeff Katz the neighbor and friend. On a personal note, I want to thank Jeff for always being supportive of my efforts as director of communications and the editor of the Gazette. His hours and days and months and years of tireless work for this community and this city do not go unrecognized by me. I see you, Jeff. We see you. Good luck in your bid for city council. You've got my vote!

A Paw's Tale

by Rover Reporter, Mark Rothenberg

This intrepid FPNA news reporter was, after months of phone calls and intense negotiation with agents, able to secure an interview with famed Golden Retriever Tuco Thompson of Flower Street.

Reporter: Tuco, it's a thrill to sit down with you.

Tuco: Thank you. By the way, you look great. Have you lost weight? The Ozempic is working for you babe—it really is. You laook amazing.

Reporter: Thank you for your kind words. Hey, what are you doing! Hey stop that!

Tuco: I screen everyone who visits for U.T.I.s—it's a public service. You can never be too careful.

Reporter: Uh, okay—very kind of you. Let's focus on the questions...you are a celebrity and spent a number of years on the show circuit. Can you talk about that?

Tuco: Oh sure. I won shows in all the big cities - New York, Paris, Rome, Riverside, Hemet. It's all good. But I got tired of all of that. I now prefer to direct.

Reporter: Your love life is legendary. I don't mean to pry but our readers want to know if you finally found the great love of your life?

Tuco: Well—I once knew a poodle in West Floral Park named Finn. But that was a long time ago when I was a younger pup. But I will never forget the promise we made to each other and how, over the course of my life, I have tried to live up to that promise. (sighs)

Reporter: That's beautiful Tuco. What was it that you loved about Finn?

Tuco: Her friend Anita—that smoking hot Basset Hound on Riverside (winks).

Reporter: What advice would you like give to all the pups out there who want to go into show business?

Tuco: Don't do peanut butter. Just say no. Stay away from it. The agents, managers, enablers—they all want to give it to you. You are surrounded by it. But just say no! Do you know what it's like to be strung out on Jiff and Skippy? It's not pretty.

Reporter: We are going to end the interview with the questionnaire invented by the great Bernard Pivot made famous by James Lipton on Inside the Actor's Studio: What is your favorite word?

Tuco: Chickums, I'm still not sure what it is, but it's delicious.

Reporter: What is your least favorite word?

Tuco: Get off. Wait, no it's Stop. I hate the word STOP.

Reporter: What turns you on?

Tuco: Anita (winks lasciviously)

Reporter: What turns you off?

Tuco: Anita after she sees me with Finn.

Reporter: Who is your least favorite person in Floral Park?

Tuco: Lester the squirrel. I can't catch him. It's infuriating. All I want is a hug Lester!

Reporter: What is your favorite curse word?

Tuco: Shmuck. Let me use it in a sentence. Lester the squirrel is a shmuck.

Reporter: What other profession would you want to attempt?

Tuco: Professional sun-bather.

Reporter: Tuco-thank you so much for meeting with us. Can we get a paw print?

Tuco: Well-my agent charges for these, but why not? I do anything for the fans (slaps paw to paper). You stay classy babe!







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Neighborhood Calendar

*Dates and times are subject to change.
Check details at FloralPark.com/calendar.*

JUNE 2024

- Neighborhood Night Out..... *Wednesday, June 26*
- Freedom Fest*Saturday, June 29*

JULY 2024

- 4th of July Parade*Thursday, July 4*
- Board Meeting *Tuesday, July 11*
- Jazz at the George*Sunday, July 28*

AUGUST 2024

- Silents Under the Stars*Saturday, August 10*
- Board Meeting*Tuesday, August 13*

SEPTEMBER 2024

- Yard Sale *Saturday & Sunday, Sept. 2 & 3*
- Board Meeting*Tuesday, Sept. 12*
- Fall Concert*Saturday, Sept. 21*

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